

# Sunshine Nursery School

2 Clark Avenue, Okotoks, AB.



## Sunshine Nursery School

2 Clark Avenue, Okotoks

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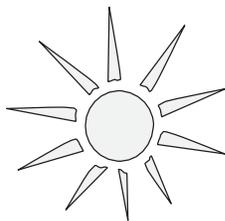
Web Address: [www.sunshinenurseryschool.ca](http://www.sunshinenurseryschool.ca)



## Parent Handbook

School Year 2017-2018

# Welcome to Sunshine Nursery School



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## YOUR CHILD'S FIRST SCHOOL



Before you decide on a school for your child we recommend that you visit our school with your child, preferably on a day when classes are in session. The teachers at any pre-school should welcome the opportunity to show you their school. During the visit we recommend that parents consider the following:

- 1 Are the teachers warm and caring?  
Do they seem to enjoy being with the children?
- 2 What are the teacher's qualifications?
- 3 Is the equipment safe, in good condition and clean?
- 4 Are there clearly established routines?
- 5 Do the children look confident and know the expectations?
- 6 Is there a variety of equipment not found in your home?
- 7 Is there a safe outdoor area that children can go to regularly?
- 8 Are the children happy?
- 9 Is the art work displayed at the children's eye level?  
Are the walls decorated with children's pictures and interesting information?
- 10 What activities are planned on a daily basis?
- 11 Are there various and interesting centres for the children such as painting easels, arts and crafts tables, a playhouse, sandbox, water tables, games, books, etc?
- 12 Would **you** like to spend **your** day there?
- 13 Was the staff friendly towards you and acknowledged your child or did you seem to inconvenience them?

We believe that Sunshine Nursery School answers **YES** to all of the above questions.



Dear Parents,

Thank you for your interest in ~~Sunshine Nursery School~~. The objective of this booklet is to inform you of our school's history, philosophy, policy, staff, and program. Since this will likely be your child's introduction to a school setting it is very important as parents that you find out as much as possible about the school you are considering. The questions on the previous page are things you may wish to reflect on before deciding on a pre-school for your child.

## HISTORY

Sunshine Nursery School is a private pre-school, where 3-5 year old children in Okotoks and surrounding areas have been taught for the past 29 years. Our operation is financed solely by tuition fees. **NO FUNDRAISING IS REQUIRED.** Private ownership allows for complete confidentiality of family information. Over 1300 children have received their early childhood experience from our school. Kristin Harnett is the owner, operator, and head teacher who has fourteen continuous teaching years at Sunshine Nursery School, ensuring consistency in teaching philosophy and excellence.

Our school is fully licensed through the Alberta Government and adheres to their regulations and childcare standards. The regulations relate to facility, health, safety, and teacher/child ratios. The school is located in a bright, warm, intimate building, originally used as a church hall and subsequently renovated for sole use as a pre-school. A beautiful courtyard lies between the preschool and the former church.

Our pre-school is widely recognized as a top educational facility. Mount Royal College has sent Early Childhood Care and Education students to Sunshine Nursery School for their practicum. We are familiar with and have training in the Reggio Emilia system, which is at the forefront in early childhood education. Photographs of our students learning through play and their artwork have been displayed at a "Reggio Emilia Exhibition" in the Nickel Arts Museum at the University of Calgary.

## PHILOSOPHY

We run one class at a time to avoid the distraction, disruption and noise of multiple classes. One of our main goals is to provide a caring, sensitive, nurturing, and safe environment for your child, since it is essential for you to feel confident about entrusting your child into our care.

Pre-school gives children an opportunity to mix with other children of the same age, to learn respect for others, and to form healthy relationships with the adults that care for them. Our philosophy is based on the knowledge that children develop best through play. For the preschooler, play is vital for healthy, all round development.

For this reason, a majority of your child's time in class will be spent in different play areas, where they will develop a variety of skills in five important growth areas: Social, Physical, Cognitive, Creative, and Emotional. These skills ease your child's transition into more formal learning environments that occur in future years.

## GOALS and OBJECTIVES

Our goal is to have a healthy and well-respected preschool known for its commitment to the "whole" child and to their early learning years. Our objectives to ensure we meet this goal are:

- To develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes which are necessary to prepare your child for life-long learning.
- To meet the individual needs of each student, working with them at their own pace and developmental level.
- To provide all children with strategies for success as they learn through interaction with other children.
- To encourage the continuous involvement of parents in their child's learning.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR (2017-2018 School Year)

Sunshine Nursery School operates for a 10 month period from September through June. The first day of the 2017-2018 school year is **Wednesday, September 6, 2017**. The first day of classes will have a staggered entry: half the class will come with their parent(s) for the first hour, and the second half will come with their parent(s) for the second hour. You will receive a letter about 3 weeks before school starts to advise you when to arrive with your child. Our last day of school will be **Thursday, June 21, 2018**. We observe all statutory holidays and most of the Foothills School Division's school holidays. Our school does not operate during the Christmas break, Easter break, Teachers Convention, or in poor weather. Parents are notified of school closure due to holidays in our regular school newsletters. Parents will be informed by telephone of school closures due to inclement weather.

## COMMUNICATION

Communication between the teaching staff and parents is very important. At Sunshine Nursery School, parents are welcome to observe and participate in our program. We encourage you to stay with your child when they first start school, until they feel comfortable with you leaving. Should you wish to discuss anything with the teaching staff, we suggest you make arrangements with them before or after class, or at a time that is more mutually convenient.

## EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Parents must provide current contact information [phone numbers and addresses] where they can be reached in case of an emergency. At least one alternative contact must be provided. This information must be updated immediately whenever there is a change.

## TEACHING STAFF

At Sunshine Nursery School, only staff that have Early Childhood experience and knowledge teach your child. Knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism characterize our school. Our teachers maintain their first-aid certification that is renewed every three years. Staff are cleared by the RCMP. TO MAINTAIN A MAXIMUM RATIO OF SIX CHILDREN PER STAFF MEMBER, EACH CLASS HAS A TEACHER AND TWO TEACHER-AIDES:



### **Kristin Harnett - Teacher**

“I graduated from the University of Regina in 2003, earning a bachelor of Education degree with a major in Early Childhood Education. This specialized degree focuses on educating children from pre-kindergarten to grade three. I also have the Child Development Supervisor Certificate in accordance with the Child Care Licensing Regulations in Alberta. During my education internship, I taught in a grade one classroom in rural Saskatchewan, a grade 3/4 split class, and a pre-kindergarten class in Regina. I was responsible for 20-24 children, planning lessons, providing assessment, and managing the classroom.

Working with children was a voluntary interest before I obtained my degree. I was a summer recreation program instructor for the City of Regina, and a child-care provider for children ages three and four in a nursery. I started teaching at Sunshine Nursery School in September, 2003. I feel that every child is unique and brings something special to the classroom. Every day is an adventure. I never know what to expect as the day unfolds. I love children and when they are happy I am pleased. The happiness that I see in the children makes teaching so rewarding.”

### **Laura Angus - Teacher Aide**

“After getting so much pleasure and enjoyment in bringing up my four children, I decided to take the pathway into childcare. I attended relevant college courses and obtained qualifications including a Level 1 Child Care Certificate. I have always enjoyed being in the company of young children, volunteering in various classrooms, and taking part on numerous field trips. I feel very privileged to be a part of Sunshine Nursery School.”

### **Charity Chanut – Teacher Aide**

“I obtained my Level 1 Child Care Certificate in Calgary in 1993. For 10 years I had the rewarding and wonderful experience of caring for young children in a Child Care setting. I was then fortunate enough to be a Stay-at-Home-Mom with my 2 children. During this time, I volunteered in the classroom, on Parent Council and for Sports Associations. I am excited to enter a new phase as a member of the Sunshine Nursery School team. I have always felt a special connection with young children and cannot wait to experience the joy and delightful curiosity the children bring to school each day.”

### **Christine Belhumeur – Teacher Aide**

“I first developed my passion for working with children through the many years I spent volunteering in my three children’s school classrooms. I obtained my Level II Childcare Worker certificate and have seven years experience working in an early childhood setting. I believe that the early years in a child’s education build a foundation of life-long learning. I love being a part of helping a child develop self confidence, great social skills, and a feeling of belonging in the school setting.”

### **Shelli Perry – Teacher Aide**

“I am thrilled to join the fantastic teaching team at Sunshine Nursery School. I have had the pleasure of being a stay-at-home mom for my two children whom attended Sunshine Nursery School for 4 years where I saw firsthand how amazing the staff and students are. During my time at home I spent countless hours volunteering in schools and various sports programs. I love working with children as I find their joy for learning so rewarding. I completed two years of a Bachelor of Education including two full years of work experience in varying ages from early childhood to grade 12.”

## TYPICAL DAILY PROGRAM

**We run only one class at a time to avoid the distraction, disruption and noise common with multiple classes.**

**Arrival:** Upon entering, teachers meet and welcome the children and discuss the team set up. General communication takes place between the teachers and children.

**Play:** Children choose which activities they would like to do. Teachers encourage children to play at each area since each centre promotes different types of learning.

**Group Time:** Children come together as a group for stories, songs and group games. Occasionally, the children may play outside in the garden.



**Washing and Snack Time:** Children wash their hands to prepare for snack. They serve their own snack.

**Ready for Home:** Children collect their creations and get ready to go home.

We are flexible in our program planning in order to meet individual and group needs. Our goal is to provide your child with an environment that is rich in learning materials and ideas, so they have the opportunity to initiate their own learning. This approach respects a child's ability to learn at their own rate of development and gives them the freedom to explore. Developing good social skills and learning in a group setting is the best way for children to prepare for kindergarten.

## THEMES

Sunshine Nursery School is a non-denominational pre-school where children of all backgrounds are welcome. Some themes which we include in our school's program are Christmas, Mother's and Father's Day, Easter, Valentine's Day, Halloween, and seasons of the year.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be scheduled to various locations in Okotoks, or to a child's farm or acreage. Parents may suggest field trips to the Sunshine Nursery School staff. Upon approval by a teacher, both parents and teachers will work together to organize the field trip. **A one-time signed consent form will be required to allow your child to leave the school premises.**

**School and individual photographs will be taken in October.**

After viewing, parents can choose to purchase the photographs.

## SECURITY POLICY

The safety and security of your child are a high priority at Sunshine Nursery School. Our policy ensures that:

- Children leave school with their parent or with an adult identified as acceptable to the parent.
- No unknown person is allowed into the school. School doors are kept locked during school hours.
- Absences from school must be verified by the parent.

## FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are practiced monthly.

## SNACK POLICY

Each child is to bring a snack of their own. It should be nutritious but **CANNOT CONTAIN NUTS, OR NUT BUTTER OF ANY KIND. Please keep snacks in small servings. Do not include popcorn, nuts, hard candy, whole grapes, or other foods which may cause your child to choke.**



## SHOW and TELL

Should your child wish to bring something special to show or share with the other children, please do so. At Sunshine Nursery School we do not schedule a "show and tell" since we encourage and prefer spontaneity.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

If necessary for disciplinary reasons, the staff caring for your child will take positive action to help direct their behavior. Physical or mental punishment from adults will not be tolerated. Each child will be respected as an individual. Any behavioral incident will be treated as an individual situation.

Reasonable limits will be set for your child and will be stated kindly, but firmly. Our staff model acceptable behavior and help your child regain self-control in difficult situations. Children are encouraged to learn through the consequence of their behavior.

## DROP-OFF and PICK-UP POLICY

For safety purposes, children are only released to their parents or individuals listed on the Emergency Contact Form. If someone other than the parent will be picking up your child, please notify the child's teacher beforehand, ensure that person's name is on the Emergency Contact Form, and that they bring valid photo ID.

**The person accompanying the child to school must bring them into the classroom. The school door will be open 5 minutes before the scheduled start of class.**

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are expected to:

- provide a healthy, nutritious snack for your child.
- be available as extra help for special events such as field trips.
- inform the teacher of any pick-up changes, either by phone or in writing.
- provide "indoor" non-slip shoes or slippers for your child.  
**No flip-flops.**
- inform the school of any person to whom their child should not be discharged. If there is a restraining order, a copy must be on file with the school.
- **LABEL YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS WITH THEIR NAME.**
- Inform the teacher if your child won't be in class, and if your child is ill with a communicable disease. **Please note that sick children will not be accepted into the class.** Children who are not immunized may be required to stay home if a communicable disease is suspected at school.
- **Please note that prompt pick up of your child is essential.**

Due to fire regulations, the school cannot allow other siblings in the classroom during normal class program times.

## CLASS TIMES and MONTHLY TUITION FEES

Sunshine Nursery School is financed solely by tuition fees. **NO FUNDRAISING BY PARENTS IS REQUIRED.**

Separate classes are offered for 3 and 4 year old children.

**a. Program for 4 Year Olds** - A child must be 4 years old by December 31, 2016 to enter this program.

<u>DAYS/WEEK</u>	<u>DAYS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MONTHLY FEE</u>
3	Mon/Wed/Fri morning	<b>9:00 am - 12:00 pm</b>	<b>\$240</b>
2	Tues/Thurs morning	<b>9:00 am - 11:30 am</b>	<b>\$190</b>

The class size will not exceed 18 children for the 4 year old program to ensure a maximum child to staff ratio of 6 to 1. (We are licensed for 20 children; Alberta regulations permit a maximum ratio of 12:1).

**b. Program for 3-Year Olds** - The child must be 3 years old before starting school, due to licensing requirements. The optimum class time for 3 year olds is 2 hours.

<u>DAYS/WEEK</u>	<u>DAYS</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>MONTHLY FEE</u>
2	Tues/Thurs afternoon	<b>12:30 pm-2:30 pm</b>	<b>\$160</b>
2	Mon/Wed afternoon	<b>12:30 pm-2:30pm</b>	<b>\$160</b>

The class size shall not exceed 16 children for the 3 year old program to ensure a maximum child to staff ratio of 5 to 1. (We are licensed for 20 children and Alberta regulations call for a maximum ratio of 12 to 1.)

## REGISTRATION FEE

**To reserve a place** for your child in our school, an annual, **non-refundable registration fee of \$100** is required at the time that you register your child. If you register two or more children for the same school year only **one registration** fee is required.

## TUITION FEE PAYMENT OPTIONS

Parents have the following options to make their payments:

**Option 1. Payment with post-dated cheques:** 10 post-dated cheques payable to Sunshine Nursery School, written for the first day of every month from September to June must be attached to your registration package with all 5 forms completed, before your registration is complete and a space is secured for your child.

**Option 2. Payment in full at time of registration:** The \$100 registration fee will be waived when the **annual class fee** is paid for the entire school year, **at the time of registration.**

**Annual tuition** fees are:

4 year old Mon/Wed/Fri mornings:	10 x 240 = \$2,400
4 year old Tues/Thurs morning:	10 x 190 = \$1,900
3 year old Tues/Thurs afternoon:	10 x 160 = \$1,600
3 year old Mon/Wed afternoon:	10 x 160 = \$1,600

**Payment must be received at the time of registration** in order to reserve your child's place for the school year (September-June).

**Post-dated cheques payable to Sunshine Nursery School or cash are acceptable for monthly tuition payments.**

The full monthly fee is required when a child is absent due to vacation or illness, regardless of the duration. Should a child be permanently withdrawn from the school, one month's written notice is required and all tuition fees paid beyond the notice period will be returned.

**PLEASE NOTE: THE SCHOOL IS A PROFESSIONAL PRE-SCHOOL WHERE THE CHILDREN ARE PREPARED FOR KINDERGARTEN. MONTHLY FEES DO NOT VARY WITH THE NUMBER OF TEACHING DAYS IN THE MONTH. THE SCHOOL IS NOT A BABY SITTING SERVICE NOR DAYCARE CENTRE WHERE RATES ARE BASED ON A PER HOUR OR PER DAY BASIS.**

**PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL OF ANY KIND, WHICH DOES NOT PERTAIN DIRECTLY TO THE SCHOOL, WILL NOT BE DISTRIBUTED TO PARENTS.**

A letter confirming registration is only sent when payment under Option 1 or 2 above is received. **PROMPT AND ACCURATE PAYMENT IS EXPECTED.** There is a **\$30 charge** for N.S.F. cheques. Outstanding fees are charged 2% interest per month.

**Termination/Suspension of Services:** We reserve the right to suspend or terminate services for: failure to make payments; disruptive behavior; or other actions deemed inappropriate. Upon termination, any outstanding balances owed to Sunshine Nursery School must be paid.

## ALBERTA CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM:

The Alberta Government has a subsidy program for **qualifying families** to help them pay the pre-school tuition. **Sunshine Nursery School is approved for this program.** A subsidy application form and further information is available on the Alberta Children's Services website at [www.child.gov.ab.ca](http://www.child.gov.ab.ca)

## LOCATION

The classes are held in a licensed facility at **2 Clark Avenue, Okotoks** and are regularly health and safety-inspected.

**Mail should be sent to:** Kristin Harnett  
#806 – 8000 Wentworth Dr. SW.  
Calgary, AB T3H 5K9

## CONCLUSION

So that's part of our story. However, it is impossible to portray in a booklet, the spirit in our school and the fun, growing, and learning that your child will experience. If you're interested in a pre-school for your child, please call for an appointment to come and meet us to see what we're all about.

## CONTACT NUMBERS

PHONE DURING SCHOOL HOURS: (403) 938-5046

PHONE ANYTIME: (403) 685-9023

EMAIL: [info@sunshinenurseryschool.ca](mailto:info@sunshinenurseryschool.ca)

WEB ADDRESS: [www.sunshinenurseryschool.ca](http://www.sunshinenurseryschool.ca)

## ATTACHED FORMS [download from website]

1. FAMILIARIZATION AND PERMISSION FORM
2. REGISTRATION
3. HEALTH RECORD INFORMATION SHEET
4. PARENT PHONE NUMBERS & EMAIL DIRECTORY
5. PHOTOGRAPH PERMISSION FORM
6. AMBULANCE PERMISSION FORM