



Queen's Park Preschool Society

Parent Handbook

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## 1.0 WELCOME TO QUEEN'S PARK PRESCHOOL

### Queen's Park Preschool (QPPS)

**Parent Participation Preschool (PPP)** is a wonderful learning environment which provides you with an opportunity to be actively involved in your child's first experience in an educational setting.

A PPP seeks to provide preschool children and their parents with an educational experience of the highest standard. Parents have an opportunity to see how children develop, to work democratically with other parents, and to help the teacher. PPP also provides:

- An easier transition from home to the outside world since the child's first step in formal education is taken with her or his parents;
- Involvement in a worthwhile community activity;
- Time to gain valuable insights and child-rearing techniques from the teacher and other parents while sharing personal talents and interests; and,
- A shared experience with the child and the teaching staff; which will hopefully continue throughout the child's education.

It is our sincere wish that you and your children will find preschool a happy and rewarding experience. We look forward to meeting the new families and the fresh ideas and vitality they bring, as well as renewing friendships with the returning families and the stability they give to our Preschool.

## 2.0 IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Preschool phone number	604-526-1153
Office email	queensparkpreschool@telus.net
Website	www.qpps.ca

### **3 year old classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays**

Morning: 9:15 – 11:15

Early Afternoon: 12:15 – 2:15

### **4 year old classes are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays**

Morning: 9:15 – 11:30

Early Afternoon: 12:15 – 2:30

**General Meetings:** First Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.  
(As posted at the Preschool unless otherwise indicated.)

**Executive Meetings:** Last Tuesday of the Month at 7:00 p.m.  
(As posted at the Preschool unless otherwise indicated.)

## 3.0 OUR TEACHING STAFF

### Teaching Staff Qualifications and Role

Preschool policy requires that Teachers must be qualified, registered with the Community Care Facilities Licensing Board.

Teachers have overall responsibility for the program, teaching methods, guidance, health and safety measures during all Preschool sessions. Teachers endeavour to involve duty parents to the best of their abilities

When necessary, new Teachers (the “teaching staff”) are hired by the Hiring Committee. The Hiring Committee includes members of the Executive, preschool parents for both class ages who will be continuing with the Preschool and other teachers.

The teaching staff are paid for full or part-time work depending the contract, with some time to allow for preparing programming for classes and liaising with families, Supported Childcare and other organizations about the progress of each child in the school.

Teachers may be required to attend General Meetings, Executive Meetings and other Preschool events throughout the year.

### Support Teachers' Role

Support teachers are hired by the Preschool typically when support-funding contracts are given by Supported Childcare. The role of the support teacher is to work within the class under the Teacher's supervision and offer general support to the entire class. While doing this they will offer specific support, in an inclusive way, to individual children that have extra support needs.

## 4.0 PHILOSOPHY AND STRUCTURE

Our children will be starting a new and stimulating period in their growth. The program is geared to the child's level of development and provides for social, intellectual, emotional and physical growth. The preschool experience will include socializing skills, music, art, reading readiness, science, and number readiness through play, snack and circle times. To enrich the program, special events and field trips are planned.

**Play is central to a quality preschool program.** Play provides opportunities for young children to learn about their world through exploring, discovering, constructing, questioning, reasoning, testing, imitating, communicating, and interacting. These activities are the forerunners of competence, problem solving and creativity. Children learn through doing. Unlike more structured learning activities, play neutralizes the pressures that come from having to achieve.

Our teaching staff see their roles as those of facilitators. They do not direct play, but strive to provide a safe, nurturing, accepting, pressure-free, fun environment, which encourages play. Materials, space, opportunities and experiences are made available so that children naturally want to play and learn. They try to stand back and not interfere with the child's natural curiosity, spontaneity, and creativity, and to provide a positive role model by example and personality. As much as possible, the program is child-centered and grows out of the children's interests and abilities.

## 5.0 WHAT IS REQUIRED OF PARENTS?

### 5.1 Before the First Day of School

#### A. Orientation

The Community Care Facilities Licensing Board requires all duty parents to complete ten hours of orientation prior to the start of the school year. The formal orientation program includes:

- Classroom observation;\*
- Attending the May general meeting;
- Attending the coffee party;\*
- Reading the Queen's Park Preschool Handbook;
- Attending the orientation workshop; and,
- Attending a parent-teacher interview.

While the Orientation Program is a licensing requirement, it is equally important that we, as members of the Preschool, are familiar with the school philosophy and operating procedures, and that we understand our role and responsibilities as duty parents. Participation in orientation also gives us the opportunity to meet and get to know other parents and to begin the year feeling comfortable and confident in our role as a duty parent.

\*Alumni parents returning to the Preschool after an absence of five years or less are not required to do a classroom observation. Attending the coffee party is also not required.

#### B. Medical Consent Form

This form attests to the wellness of a duty parent/caregiver. It is to be signed by a physician and returned to the Orientation Coordinator before a child can attend the Preschool. Most doctors will sign this form free of charge; however, if your doctor charges a fee, it is your responsibility to pay.

#### C. Earthquake Comfy Kits

To help prepare for dealing with a potential earthquake, a **comfy kit** will be put together for each child in the Preschool prior to the beginning of the school year. Please see the section **11.3 in Earthquake Procedures** for more information on what needs to go into each kit.

#### D. Criminal Record Check for Duty Parents

Each Duty Parent must complete a Criminal Record Check prior to acting as a duty parent in class. This form must be returned to the Orientation Coordinator. If you have questions regarding this process, please contact the Orientation Coordinator.

#### E. Children's Footwear

Children need indoor shoes to leave at the school. They should be easy for the children to put on themselves. Remember that feet grow fast so check the fit every couple months.

### 5.2 After the First Day of School

#### Duty Days: A special time for children and parents.

Your duty day is a very special time that provides you with an opportunity to observe your child and to share in his or her preschool experiences. You will also supervise and assist the other children in their activities and perform various housekeeping duties. As a duty parent you are considered a "teacher's assistant" and you will take direction from the teacher, who has the overall responsibility for the classroom, including discipline, health, safety, and of course, the daily program. For a detailed description of Duty Day responsibilities, see **Operational Information** (section **7.0**).

#### A. Scheduling Duty Days

Duty schedules are prepared by the Class Reps and circulated to parents in advance. Each parent will typically do two to three duty days per month depending on class size. Please let your class rep know if there are specific days that you cannot be on duty. This should be done in writing when requested by your Class Rep. Duty days should be distributed as evenly as possible over the course of the year in order to maintain program continuity and fairness to the rest of the class. Also, in cases where parents are sharing duty, it's best if duty days are best shared as equally as possible.

If you are unable to make a duty day, which has been assigned to you, it's your responsibility to find another parent to exchange days with you. Please advise your Class Rep and the teacher of the new arrangements and mark the change on the duty schedule posted on the bulletin board.

If you are unable to find another parent to change days with you, contact the Emergency Duty Parent who is listed on the monthly schedule. It is important that you find a substitute duty parent if you are unable to attend on your duty day. Due to licensing regulations, the Preschool may be **closed** if we do not have a sufficient number of duty parents for a session.

### **B. Snack Parent**

The Snack Parent is responsible for providing a nutritious snack for each child, the duty parents and the teachers. Snack time is typically scheduled midway through the class, however the time may vary based on class activities. It allows socialization for the children, as well as a boost of energy. The children are usually very hungry; however, snack is not meant to be a meal. They are only given 10 to 15 minutes to quietly eat the snack. Please see section **8.0 (Duty Day Duties)** of this handbook for snack suggestions.

**Please Note: Queen's Park Preschool is an Allergen Aware Zone.** We try our best to ensure that no nuts/nut products come to school. This applies to the snacks for both the children's classes and the parent's meetings. The rationale for this is to protect children with extreme food/nut allergies who may react when coming in contact with such products. Also, be alert of any child with a food allergy.

If your child has food allergies, please list the specific items your child is allergic to in the beginning of the year and procedures to follow in the event of an allergic reaction. Any food allergies should be listed on snack time place mats and posted in the kitchen.

### **C. Bathroom Parent**

The Bathroom Parent is responsible for accompanying children to the bathroom, assisting with hand washing before snack time, and assisting with other duties when required. For more information, please refer to section **8.0 Duty Day Duties**.

### **D. Art Parent**

The Art Parent is responsible for assisting the teacher in the preparation of the day's art activities and supervising and assisting children in the art areas. Again, for more information, please refer to section **8.0 Duty Day Duties**.

## **5.3 Preschool Cleaning and Set-Up**

In addition to the ongoing cleaning associated with jobs there is a thorough cleaning of the Preschool (every two weeks) organized by the parent-run Clean Team.

At the beginning of the school year the returning 4's parents are asked to send at least one parent from each family for set-up night where the school is thoroughly cleaned and set up as per the direction of the teaching staff.

After the last day of school, all the 3's parents are responsible for a final cleaning. Members will be advised of the dates for the year-end clean-up.

## **5.4 Preschool Jobs and Committees**

In addition to duty days, each family of the Preschool must do an ongoing preschool job. While every effort will be made to give members a job of their choice, it may not always be possible to accommodate all requests.

The list of jobs is in the Appendix of this handbook. Descriptions of executive positions are included in the



Preschool Policy and Procedures.

## 5.5 Fundraising

Fundraising provides some of the money required to operate the Preschool. Funds raised also go towards updating furniture, toys and materials.

Every member must participate in fundraising. Members are expected to participate in the School's Annual Silent Auction, which has been our primary fundraising venture for some time. Other fundraising projects for example may include (but are not limited too) the sale of QPP sweatshirts, and plates and mugs decorated by the children.

### **Each member must:**

- Contribute at least one item and/or solicit items from businesses for the auction.

### **Members might also consider:**

- Sitting on the Silent Auction Committee; or
- Volunteering for a small job at the event itself.

## 5.6 Payment of Fees

Fees are set in the spring of each year for the year ahead. Post-dated cheques are required for September through to June of the up coming school year. These post-dated cheques must to be submitted to the Enrollment Coordinator in May, in addition to the Registration fee.

If a member's cheque is returned from the bank due to non-sufficient funds (NSF) the member will be contacted by the Treasurer's Assistant and will be required to deliver the amount owing plus any additional charges resulting from the NSF cheque. If the member is unable to provide replacement cash by a specific date, the Treasurer's Assistant will notify the Personnel Committee for immediate action.

Families going through difficult financial times can apply to the Hardship Fund for assistance by speaking to a Personnel Officer or the teachers.

Please remember that non-payment or late payment of fees may be grounds for expulsion. There will be no refund of the registration fee, September or June tuition.

## 6.0 MEETINGS

### 6.1 General Meeting and Procedures

Attending general meetings is a licensing requirement and a QPP policy requirement. Failure to comply puts members at risk of jeopardizing their child's continuing attendance at the Preschool.

A family must attend at least 8 out of 10 General Meetings. Ideally a family will attend all meetings.

To meet your requirement to attend General Meetings, a family can be represented by a duty parent, other parent or guardian of the child. Special exemptions may be considered to have another family member represent the family at General Meetings. These may be made at the discretion of the Executive, on the basis of hardship and where a caregiver relationship with the child is present.

Although the Parent Education portion is a mandatory requirement, it also provides us as duty parents with a wonderful opportunity to increase our knowledge about children, which in turn can help us become more effective in our role as parents. Through guest speakers, videos, and sharing ideas with other parents, the education sessions form a valuable part of the QPP program.

The business portion involves an agenda drawn up by the President. If you have an item you would like placed on the agenda, please contact your Class Rep prior to the meeting. Items requiring a vote by the general membership are brought forward by "Motions". A motion is a proposal that the group take certain action and is the basis for discussion on all major decisions of the Preschool

### 6.2 Meeting Rules of Order

The procedure for putting forward a motion is as follows:

1. After obtaining the floor and being recognized by the Chair, a member may propose a motion by saying: "I move that..."
2. Another member seconds the motion. The seconder does not have to be in favour of the motion.
3. The chair states the motion: "The motion to... has been seconded. It is now open to debate."
4. The person making the motion has the right to speak first. Debate must be confined to the question. Those wishing to speak to the motion are requested to raise their hands and wait until the Chair has recognized them before speaking. The Chair may keep a speakers list if several people wish to speak.
5. When the debate appears to have closed, the Chair will ask if there is any further discussion. If no one responds, the Chair will repeat the motion and request a show of hands for those in favour and those opposed. Once the vote is taken the Chair will announce the result of the vote. Each family has one vote.

Whenever possible, proposed motions will be published in the emailed agenda in advance of the General Meeting so members have an opportunity to consider items on which they may be voting.

### 6.3 Missed Meeting

Parents must attend for the full duration of the General Meeting in order to meet licensing and policy requirements. This includes the Parent Education portion, the business portion, and the class meeting portion of the General Meeting. If a parent is absent from any portion of the General Meeting, they are considered to have missed the meeting.

If a family misses a meeting, they need to complete parent education homework within 2 weeks of the missed meeting. If homework is not received within 2 weeks, they are ineligible for duty until the homework has been received.

Failure to complete parent education homework or to attend meetings will be referred to the Personnel Officers, who will meet with the family in order to enforce the Parents' Contract.

### 6.4 Hosting and Clean-Up for the General Meetings

Parents take turns providing snacks for the coffee break and putting away chairs and cleaning up after monthly meetings. Hosts are asked to arrive at the Preschool 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting to set up chairs for the meeting, make coffee and tea, and set out snacks. Your night to host will be assigned by the General Meeting Coordinator.

Clean-up is done as a class (3am for example) and announced at the meeting. Responsibilities include tidying kitchen, loading dishwasher, putting away any remaining chairs and returning the classroom to its original order, turning off lights, turning on alarm and locking the Preschool.

### **6.5 Executive Meetings**

Executive Meetings are held once a month on the last Tuesday of every month before the General Meeting. Attendance at monthly Executive Meetings is required for all members of the Executive. Other members are welcome to attend Executive Meetings but are not required to do so.

## 7.0 OPERATIONAL INFORMATION

### 7.1 Starting at Preschool

#### **3 year old classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays**

Morning: 9:15 – 11:15

Early Afternoon 12:15 – 2:15

#### **4 year old classes are Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays**

Morning 9:15 – 11:30

Early Afternoon 12:15 – 2:30

It is common for a child to have difficulty leaving his/her parents for the first few days. It is helpful if the parent stays nearby to support her or him until the child feels comfortable in this new environment. If the child does not adjust within a few days, feel free to talk to the teacher to discuss it further.

If parents feel there is a problem with their child's adjustment, progress, development, or behaviour, or if they have any concerns or questions about any aspect of the school program, they should not hesitate to contact the teacher. While it is sometimes difficult to discuss properly a particular problem during a session, the teacher will be glad to set aside a special time for these discussions at a mutually agreeable time.

Please note that it can be overwhelming for the children to have extra adults in the class. If you would like to observe on a non-duty day, please check with the teacher in advance (ideally, give at least one class' notice) to make sure that your visit can be accommodated.

### 7.2 Clothing

Children should wear comfortable clothes that are suitable for both creative art projects and outside play. Remember, having fun can be a messy business! Please ensure your child wears **boots** everyday, as they will be going outdoors for walking and playing, weather permitting. Each child also needs **indoor shoes** to be kept at school; please do not send slippers, as these do not provide adequate protection in the event of an emergency evacuation. All removable clothing should be marked with nametags – coats, sweaters, mittens, boots etc.

Each day your child needs to bring a backpack with a full change of clothing, including Pull-Ups/diapers/wipes if your child uses them.

### 7.3 Drop Off and Pick Up

When arriving at the school the adult dropping off the child needs to sign the child in on the sign in/sign out sheet. If there is another adult picking up the child, please make a note of the adult who will be picking up the child. When picking up the child, please sign the child out on the sign in/ sign out sheet. If a teacher or supervisor does not recognize the adult picking up the child they may require proof of identification (driver's license) before releasing the child. These regulations are a requirement and enforced by licensing.

Upon arrival at school, children should remove their coats, change into their indoor shoes and wait for the teacher on the carpeted area for circle time. In time, many children will feel comfortable saying "good-bye" at the door, however some will want their parents to come into the classroom with them. Should this happen, and you have a younger child with you, please keep this child with you at all times as our insurance covers only the children registered in the program, and the classroom is not "childproof" for children under three. To allow teaching staff to begin the session, parents should aim to make their drop off as "efficient" as possible.

When picking children up from school, please wait outside until the "good-bye" song has been sung and the teacher has given you the signal to come in. A few minutes can seem like a long time to a young child, so please try to be on time when picking up your child. If you will be delayed for any length of time due to an emergency, please let the teacher know.

Please note that during preschool hours and consequently during dismissal time it is every parent's responsibility to ensure the safety of our children. All parents waiting outside the school for their children should be aware of additional "little bodies."

Please be prompt to pick up and drop off your child. She or he will be anxiously awaiting your arrival.

#### **7.4 Mail**

Written information is distributed throughout the Preschool via mailboxes above the cubbies. Please check for mail and new art work from your child daily. Please also remember to check the bulletin boards at the entrance of the Preschool.

Newsletters, class updates and preschool business is sent to preschool families by email.

Birthday party invitations should be sent by mail or email, not distributed at the school.

#### **7.5 Cubbies**

Each child will have a "cubby" which will be labeled with his or her first name and last name and picture. Each cubby is typically shared between children in different classes. Children's artwork or craft projects will be placed in the top part of the cubby to be taken home, the middle section is for coats, hats, etc., and the lowest shelf is for shoes and boots.

#### **7.6 Special Events**

##### **A. Birthdays**

Your child's birthday will be scheduled on the closest possible school day to his or her birthday and you will be scheduled as a duty parent on that day so you may join in the celebration. As the parent of the birthday child you may want to bring a festive snack, like cupcakes, to share with the entire class (please see snack duty section). Children whose birthday falls outside of the school year will have a celebration date at their "half" birthday, or during the month of June.

##### **B. Field Trips**

Field trips are typically a 4 year old activity and are planned according to the themes and program the teacher has prepared for the children. Siblings are not permitted on field trips, as they are not covered by the Preschool's insurance. Adequate supervision on field trips is required and must be provided by parents or other designated caregivers attending field trips with their children.

## 8.0 DUTY DAYS DUTIES

### Overall responsibility on Your Duty Days

1. When your monthly duty schedule arrives, please mark down the times you are to attend the class and insert it in front of your handbook. Not only are the children and the teacher counting on your attendance and your assistance, but also our License to operate depends upon it. If you cannot come on the scheduled date, it is your responsibility to telephone another parent and exchange with them, and then note the change on the duty schedule posted on the bulletin board at the Preschool. The class usually designates an emergency person to cover. However, this is to be used only in emergencies and is used on an exchange basis. Please be aware that if you do not show up, the class may have to be cancelled.
2. Please arrive 30 minutes before class on your duty day and plan on staying an additional 30 minutes after class. This time is used to clean the bathroom, organize snacks and crafts, or perform any other duties the teacher may require. You will then have time for the more rewarding task of participating in the program.
3. Please remember when it is your turn to bring the snack to prepare as much of it in advance at home. The following section provides snack suggestions.
4. Please make use of exchange babysitting, as siblings are not allowed at school. Our insurance coverage does not allow any other children to be present during class.
5. Wear comfortable clothing that is suitable for messy activities and come prepared to be outside for part of the program.
6. Please help the teacher supervise the children at all times. Section **9.0 (Guidance Policy)** provides some suggestions on how to be most effective.
7. The Child Care Regulation Act states the licensee (Preschool) shall ensure that no child enrolled in its facility is subjected to emotional, physical or sexual abuse. If a situation does arise in the Preschool, immediate steps will be taken.

### 8.1 Snack Parent Tasks

#### Before Class

- Morning parent - unload dishwasher. Hand-dry where necessary and put dishes away.
- Arrange 4 snack trays.
- Pour water into 4 water jugs approx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.
- Get playdough from fridge and put out for class.

#### During Class

- Early afternoon parent - unload dishwasher. Hand-dry where necessary and put dishes away (this may need to be done after class).
- When requested open climber for the children (this is a shared duty with the Bathroom Parent and the teachers).
- During circle time, wash down tables with the alternate-bleach solution spray, then wipe with clean water/clean cloth, and put out enough chairs for everyone around the snack tables (children are not to help with this).
- After tables are washed down, set out plates with placemats on top, put water jugs and cups on table. Bring out snack when directed by teacher. Help serve snack.

#### After Class

- Load and run dishwasher with snack dishes. Hand wash items as needed.
- Wipe off snack tables with alternate-bleach solution and then wipe with clean water/clean cloth (children are not to help with this).
- Early afternoon parent - empty garbage can into garbage bin at the top of the outside stairs. Replace garbage bag.
- Early afternoon parent – empty compost and paper towel basket in green bin outside.
- Wipe down garbage can and paper towel dispenser near art sink.
- Sweep and mop kitchen floor.
- Empty green waster daily and then line with paper towel.
- Help other duty parents if they have not finished their list.

## 8.2 Bathroom Parent Tasks

### Before Class

- Ensure toilets and sinks are clean.
- Check the paper towel dispenser and fill if necessary.
- Check toilet paper in both bathrooms and fill as needed.
- Check the hand soap dispensers and fill if needed.
- Morning parent - put toys out for outdoor play.
- Put out shoes.
- Assist Art Parent as needed.

### During Class

- Assist children with toileting and washing hands.
- Before snack, assist with group hand washing.
- When requested, open the climber for children (this is a shared duty with Snack Parent and teachers).
- Assist other parents as needed.

### After Class

- Clean toilets with alternate-bleach solution.
- Ensure paper towel dispensers and hand soap dispensers are full.
- Sweep and mop bathroom floor.
- Wipe down counter/sink with alternate-bleach solution and clean mirrors as needed.
- Early afternoon parent - empty paper towel bin in green bin outside.
- Early afternoon parent – wipe down bathroom door handles and light switches.
- Sweep main preschool area.
- Vacuum all carpeted areas.
- Shoe basket put on stack.
- Wipe down door handles and front door handles.
- Each Friday, empty vacuum cleaner dispenser.

- Help other parents if they are not finished their list.

### 8.3 Art Parent Tasks

#### Before Class

- Assist with setting up art activity (teacher will inform you of the day's art).
- Line easel trays with paper towel for easier clean-up if paint easels are being used.
- Morning parent - put emergency kits and comfy kits outside (rolling garbage cans).
- Put away art from the drying rack into children's mailboxes.

#### During Class

- Assist children with the day's art activity (names on art, replenishing supplies etc.).
- Assist Bathroom Parents with washing the children's hands.

#### After Class

- Wipe down paint easels and craft table. Re-line easel tray with paper towel.
- Clean-up any craft utensils used (i.e. rinse sponges, paint pots).
- Clean-up any paint on the floor.
- Morning parent – leave brushes in paint pots, put the pots on the counter.
- Early afternoon parent – clean paintbrushes and put lids on paint pots.
- Wipe down monkey bars, slide, mat and phone booth with alternate-bleach solution.
- Wipe down play dough table.
- Early afternoon parent - bring in emergency bins.
- Please wipe down play phone booth.
- Sweep playhouse stairs (and upstairs if necessary).
- Mop main floor area.
- Help other parents if they are not finished their lists.

### 8.4 Snacks and Allergies

#### A. Snacks

A good snack is something that looks and tastes good, is enough to eat but not too much, has nutritional value (not just empty calories), is easy to prepare and is fun. Please ensure snacks are prepared in a way that minimizes the risk of choking (i.e. cutting food lengthwise). Some examples include:

- Fruits and vegetables:
  - Apple wedges, banana slices, orange segments, pears, plums, berries, melons.
  - Carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, celery sticks, green pepper strips, broccoli or cauliflower (accompanied with a good dip).
- Breads and cereals:
  - Bagels, pita bread, whole grain crackers or nourishing quick breads, muffins or cookies (which are especially good on birthdays and holidays).
- Dairy:



- Milk, yogurt, sour cream dips (to accompany fruits and vegetables), ice cream, cheese cubes, cream cheese, cheese spread.
- Meat and alternates:
  - Eggs, hummus (chick peas) mini pizzas, sausage slices, deli meats sliced thick and cubed.

### Some Things to Remember

- Snack is a busy duty. It is helpful to have your snack prepared before you arrive at the school. The half hour to prepare goes by very quickly.
- Children progress at differently when it comes to safe eating practices. Please be aware when bringing grapes, carrots or other hard foods that they may pose a choking hazard and teachers may request they be peeled, cut in half or otherwise prepared.
- Water is served at snack time so you don't need to bring drinks.
- It is nice to have a bit of variety, usually two things from two different food groups.

### B. Allergies

Queen's Park Preschool is an **Allergen Aware Preschool**. This is to protect children with extreme allergies who may react to touching or consuming specific products. It is for this reason that we must be extremely careful not to bring to school any food item that may or does contain nuts or nut products of any kind. Please be extra aware of any child with a food allergy. A child likes to be part of the group, so try your best to accommodate that child and parent.

If your child has food allergies please list the specific items your child is allergic to in the beginning of the year and procedures to follow in the event of an allergic reaction. A list of those children with allergies will be circulated and posted for reference on the refrigerator at the school.

When preparing snacks or party food for the Preschool, please ensure the following:

- Know the foods to which the children in the class may be allergic.
- Know all the names under which the allergenic food may appear.
- Carefully read the labels of foods you buy or the ingredients you use to make snack or party food.
- Ensure that all utensils and cutting or food preparation surfaces are clean to avoid contamination.
- Food Labeling.
- Milk – may appear as milk, skim milk, whey, whey powder, cream, evaporated milk, buttermilk, sour cream, cheese, curds, milk solids, butter, lactose, casein, caseinate, sodium caseinate, potassium caseinate, lacto globulin, yogurt.
- Lactic acid, lactate, and lactylate do not contain milk and do not need to be avoided.
- Eggs – may appear as egg powder, yolk, albumen, lactalbumin, globulin, ovoglobulin.
- Peanuts – may appear as vegetable oil, peanut or peanut oil, peanut butter, peanut flour, peanut meal, mandelona, ground nuts, mixed nuts, nut oil.

## 9.0 GUIDANCE POLICY

In our Preschool classroom, we strive to support young children in developing behaviours that are appropriate and socially acceptable. Queen's Park Preschool children are made aware of a number of safety rules, including

- We walk inside the Preschool, not run.
- Climber is to be used with an adult only and when the sign indicates it is open.
- Children are not to leave the Preschool without an adult.

A Guidance Policy is in place to advise the members of the policy to ensure that guidance procedures are applied uniformly and fairly.

### 9.1 Philosophy

- To guide children in a manner which leaves the child's self-esteem intact and which fits the child's stage of development.
- To help children develop acceptable social behaviours by teaching them appropriate preschool values/rules.
- To positively guide children, enabling them to become self-disciplined, happy responsible adults.

### 9.2 Procedure in the Event of Misbehaviour

This procedure will apply when continually disruptive or inappropriate behaviour is identified by the supervisor or parents of the class. Disruptive and inappropriate behaviour includes but is not exclusive to: biting, swearing, hitting, pushing, continuous screaming, acting-out, and activities dangerous to themselves or others.

1. Teacher will address behaviour with child.
2. Teacher will advise child's parents of behaviour and seek additional information or provide suggestions to parents as a means of resolving the inappropriate behaviour.
3. If inappropriate behaviour continues, the child will be sent home. A parent/caregiver must be available to collect the child. If the situation results in the child being sent home on two occasions, then the situation will be reviewed by the teacher, personnel representative and Personnel Chair. An action plan will be determined and implemented immediately. This policy shall be included in the Parent's Handbook and reviewed at the September Orientation.

### 9.3 Helpful Guidance Techniques

#### Be Positive

This shows the child a more acceptable way to act. Take opportunities to praise and reinforce positive behaviour.

- "Thank you for helping tidy up."
- "I like the polite way you asked for the puzzle."
- "That is a safe way to use the climber."

#### Establish Limits

Rules and limits are necessary for safe living. Behaviour must be stopped if it is unsafe, destructive or disruptive to others.

- Detour and Provide Alternatives
- Offer alternatives to negative behaviour.
  - "It's not safe to run inside. You may fly your kite outside."

- “If you bang on the toy it will break. Playdough is a good thing to pound on.”
- “I cannot let you play with Mary if you hit. It hurts. Play over here until you can manage.”

### **Be Encouraging**

Help the child only when he really needs help. If the child is stuck, offer a helpful suggestion, but don't tell the child how to do it. Offer reassurance if necessary.

### **Be Understanding**

We all have days or times when we feel angry, frustrated, or have “bad” feelings. Accept the child's feelings, no matter how bad they are. Try to help the child work these things through.

### **Be Friendly**

This helps to create a good learning atmosphere, and helps the children feel secure.

### **Allow the Child to be Creative**

The creative person develops gradually. A structured or directed activity is not creative. If creative work is to flourish, children must have the opportunity to experiment, to test, to explore, to use materials of their choice, to use their imagination, and to express themselves.

### **Allow the Child to be Helpful**

Let the child help with jobs – it may be slower and the results may not be just the way you want them, but it helps the child feel like a responsible member of the group and helps to build self confidence.

### **Have a Quiet, Confident Manner**

The quiet understanding adult helps the child feel confident. Move without apparent haste, but be ready to step in where necessary.

### **Anticipate**

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Many problems can be avoided by being alert to the possibility of trouble, conflict, unhappiness or disappointment.

### **Allow Children to Take Their Time**

The preschool aged child can't be hurried. Please give the children time to finish what they are doing. This helps give children a feeling of accomplishment.

### **Be Firm When Necessary**

A child may not do anything that is harmful, dangerous or destructive. Certain actions must be stopped. Say simply, “I can't allow you to do that.” Accept the child's feelings in an understanding way, but do not permit the child to act out feelings in a way that is harmful, dangerous, or destructive. Try and find a harmless, non-destructive way of letting troubled feelings out. Exercise authority firmly – without arguing or coaxing.

### **Respect the Child**

Respect the children's right to be themselves. Children develop at their own rate – don't expect too much. Keep the long-term goals in mind. The child is learning to share. The child is learning to get along socially. But it takes time.

### **Children are Very Imaginative**

Sometimes it is hard for ‘grown-ups’ to see just what it is a child has built and painted. When a child has lavished time and effort on a piece of work and then proudly displays it, sometimes the child is willing to tell you about it. You might ask the child if they would like to tell you about it, but if the child considers it to be something private that they do not want to talk about, it is best not to pursue the matter. You risk hurting the child if you ask, “What is it?”

## 10.0 PROCEDURES REGARDING CONCERNS ABOUT MEMBERS AND THE TEACHING STAFF

Concerns or disputes are dealt with by one of two parent volunteer Personnel Officers. The purpose of the Personnel Officers is:

- To promote growth, understanding and unity within our Preschool so our children may benefit from a harmonious environment;
- To inform the members of the Personnel Policy and its function; and,
- To outline the structure and operation of the Personnel Committee. (A Personnel Committee is formed in the event that there is a dispute.)

The President and the teaching staff are not members but may act as resources when called upon. The Chairperson is elected by the Personnel Committee members at its formation.

The Personnel Committee's responsibilities include:

- Ensuring Members are performing their duties as outlined in the Parent Agreement;
- Dealing with concerns from Members or the teaching staff regarding the conduct of other Members;
- Assessing any probationary teaching staff;
- Mediating to resolve any other matters of concern regarding the personnel or Members of the Preschool; and,
- Working in a spirit of conciliation, in the strictest confidence.

Concerns or complaints are relayed to a Personnel Officer. The concern is identified and facts clarified. Contact with the identified Member/teaching staff is made by a member of the Committee on a one-to-one basis, ensuring privacy and confidentiality.

If a meeting with the Committee is deemed necessary, time and place will be chosen to accommodate all parties. The Personnel Committee will ensure that any Members/teaching staff involved in a problem situation has a supportive representative. The reason for the meeting and procedure to be followed must be made clear. There may be up to three Personnel Committee members involved in the meeting, depending on the situation. At the first meeting, the concern will be assessed, a plan of action outlined and a date set to evaluate the outcomes. No specific incidents will be recorded on paper (involved individuals may keep private notes if they feel it is necessary). If the problem is not resolved, the Executive or Council may be approached for further assistance.

As responsible, mature and caring individuals, naturally we should try to resolve any issues we have with others on our own. However, in the event that a problem/issue arises, the protocol is as follows:

1. Discuss the situation with the teaching staff; or
2. Discuss the situation with the class representative; or
3. Discuss the situation with a member of the executive.

In any of the above scenarios, the class representative, the teaching staff or the executive member will respect the privacy of all parties involved and not repeat any confidences.

Ideally, the dispute will be resolvable at this level. If not, the Personnel Chair will become involved and will act as a mediator/negotiator.

## **10.1 Protocol for Meeting with Parents About Their Child at Preschool: First Meeting with Parents**

Families can expect a meeting to follow this agenda:

### **1. Purpose of Meeting: “Look out for the best interest of the child.”**

- We want to be able to meet child's needs better.
- We want and need to work together.
- We need to give support to one another.

### **2. Identifying Child's Needs:**

- List child's positive traits (elicit parents' responses as well).
- List child's positive development (elicit parents' responses as well).
- Parents' concerns.
- Preschool's concerns “What's best for child?”
- Are we meeting child's needs?
  - Child's social behaviour re: group settings.
  - Volatile behaviour i.e. flailing arms and uncontrollable outburst of anger.
  - Class parents' concerns on how to deal with child.
  - Children's reaction – fear of child's outburst.

### **3. Plan of Action:**

- Support from the Preschool
  - Observations – providing objective data, to help us “assess.”
  - Provide list of possible resources of support and alternative for present situation.
- Support from parents?
  - Outside assessment possible?
  - Doctor's testing (possible food allergies, etc.).
  - Documentation? (Food intake? Sleeping patterns? “Typical” days patterns of event in relation to observation day).
  - Keeping a diary of child's day and events/foods for the day.

### **4. Future Dates:**

- Set observation dates.
- Set reconvening date.

## **10.2 Reconvening with the Parents**

### **1. Purpose of Meeting: “Which direction do we choose to take?”**

- We want to look out for the best interests for child.
- We need to look at the long-term goals.
- We need to be supportive of one another.
- Any changes that have occurred during the past month?

None of us can make any hard/fast assumption i.e. diagnosis based on our observations, only our own opinions.

## **2. Reviewing the Documentation:**

- Observers presenting data and observations.
- Clarifying the data that has been collected.
- Discussing any questions re data.
- Identifying any patterns that may be occurring in the data.

## **3. Reflections:**

- What do we think?
- Where do we go from here? i.e. further monitoring later?, going to outside resources? Etc.

## **4. Outside Resources:**

- Variety Child Development Center (Surrey)
- “Temperament Project” Challenge Program
- Ministry Social Services
- New Westminster Health Department
- Ministry for Children and Families
- New Westminster Supported Child Care Committee

## **5. Further Directions/Goals:**

- Home - define specific tasks that can be implemented at home.
- Preschool – define specific tasks that can be implemented at the Preschool.

Reconvene at another mutually agreed date when a period of time has elapsed. This time should allow the child time to have time to “absorb” any new schedules/processes/patterns etc. and time to show possible improvement. Possible consideration for amount of time might be three (3) weeks.

## **10.3. Personnel Meeting Regarding a Child of Concern**

Members at meeting: Teacher, Personnel Chair, possibly the President, and the parents of child.

### **COURSE PLAN:**

#### **1. Meet with the Parents:**

Agenda of Meeting would contain the following items for discussion:

1. Purpose of meeting.
2. Child's needs.
3. Parents' concerns.
4. Plan of Action.
5. Reconvening date.

#### **2. Observations:**

- Conducted by qualified people (with “training” in making objective observations).
- Need to have a minimum of three (3) consecutive observations.
- Raw data needs to be summarized prior to reconvening meeting with parents.

**3. Reconvene with the Parents:**

- Discuss observations and other possible documentation.
- Identify child's needs if possible.
- Discuss alternatives and possibilities.
- Are we as a Preschool meeting the child's needs?
- Are there resources we can share?
  - Special Needs Preschool
  - Local Child Psychologist
  - Services for children requiring extra support
- Possible outside assessment?
  - Health Unit
  - Variety Club

## 11.0 SAFETY PRACTICES AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

As required by the Child Care Licensing Regulation (CCLR), Queen's Park Preschool must establish emergency procedures before the opening of the facility and ensure that all employees and duty parents are thoroughly trained and informed in the Preschool's Emergency and Safety Procedures.

The Preschool has practices and procedures in place to help deal with emergency situations. It is essential that we are all aware of these procedures, equipment, and safety kits so that we may protect our children in the event of an emergency. Should anyone have any questions or concerns regarding safety or procedures at our Preschool, please bring them to the attention of the Preschool's Safety Coordinator.

### 11.1 Safety Kits and Practices

First Aid Kits are kept in two areas: one is in the **RED MEC** backpack (teacher's backpack) near the emergency doors as well as in the bottom drawer of the blue parent resources bookshelf. The **RED** teacher's backpack with the First Aid Kit and each child's emergency information card will be brought by the teacher on every field trip

The **Earthquake Preparedness Tote** is kept to the left of the emergency exit doors for quick and easy retrieval. As well, the school has a **Comfy Kit Rolling Emergency Bin** (labeled with their class) stored outside of the Emergency doors. The bins contain the children's individual Comfy Kits that were collected at the beginning of the year. Remember that it is essential to take these bins with you as you exit in an emergency. However, if there is imminent danger, the priority is to remove the children and staff as soon as possible. (Please do not let these bins block the emergency doors at any time.)

All safety incidents and head injuries are reported to the child's parent or caregiver.

### 11.2 Fire Procedures and Evacuation Procedures

In the event of a fire or fire drill each Duty Parent has a job to do. The Preschool has two (2) fire extinguishers: One larger red extinguisher is located just outside the kitchen on the lower left and the other, a white extinguisher is mounted on the wall to the right of the rear stairwell doors, near the carpentry bench. Please familiarize yourself with their location. (If you smell smoke or find a fire – immediately pull the fire alarm (2 located inside) and phone 911. Evacuate the Preschool as outlined below.

#### Snack Parent

- a. Evacuate the kitchen and bring the EPI-PEN (if applicable).
- b. Make sure all children and adults are out (assist where necessary).
- c. Leave last through the emergency doors (double doors). Shut, but **do not** lock door.

#### Bathroom Parent

- a. Check bathroom and cleaning supplies room for children.
- b. Leave building with the children. If required, roll out Emergency bins. The building will most likely be unsafe to re-enter.

#### Art Parent

- a. Check carpentry bench area first and make your way to the Playhouse – checking under all tables and in the climber. You must enter the Playhouse to properly check it.
- b. Leave building. If bins still remain at doorway, take them with you. Ensure someone has also taken the Red Backpack.

#### Teaching Staff

- a. Take attendance records an emergency cell phone and evacuate office.
- b. Grab Red backpack.
- c. Leave with children.



Everyone is to gather away from the building at the specified Primary Meeting Place.

The **Primary Meeting** place is the **BIG ROCK** behind the Preschool preferably on the sidewalk (it can be very muddy around the rock) and await further instructions from the teacher. **Caution:** Slope can be very slippery when it is raining or there is snow cover. Group leader may choose to take the sidewalk to the rock.

If unable to re-enter the Preschool, the group must then proceed to the **Secondary Meeting Place**, which is the **QUEEN'S PARK ARENA LOBBY**. It is just up the road from our Preschool. If able to (while enroute with the children), call the Arena Office and let them know you are on the way so they can mobilize the staff to assist with our children if necessary. The Arena's Office number is 604-777-5111. The doors are always unlocked during normal business hours. **Note:** Assign a Duty Parent to bring appropriate Comfy Kit tote. (Note: This is **NOT** the same building as the Arenex, which houses the Motoring Munchkins and Gymnastics facility.)

### **Call class rep to start a phone tree.**

These procedures will be practiced as drills on a monthly basis with the children and the Duty Parents will be trained in orientation and will also participate in the children's drills.

## **11.3 Earthquake Preparedness**

### **Procedure in case of Earthquake**

#### **1. Minor Quake**

- Take protective action, then assess situation and proceed as factors indicate.
- In the event of a quake that falls in the category between a tremor and a major disaster, you are requested to pick up your child as soon as possible.
- A duty parent or member of the teaching staff will not be expected to stay for more than two hours after this type of quake. Any children left after that time will be dispersed with one of the on-duty parents. Notice of whereabouts will be left at the Preschool.

#### **2. Major Quake**

- At first sign of a quake, duty parents and the teaching staff will immediately initiate the "drop and cover" method of self-protection.
  - i. Assume crash position (on knees with head down, hands clasped on the back of neck).
  - ii. Face away from windows and shelves.
  - iii. Presumed safest area – mid room between metal support poles.
  - iv. Count aloud to sixty.
- When immediate quake and/or after-shocks have passed, priority should be given to removing children and adults from the building. Calmly proceed to evacuate the school as outlined above in section **11.2**.

In the field, deal with any injuries; and place pre-printed nametags on each child. Listen to the portable radio or a car radio for any immediate emergency instructions. After a reasonable period, if the building is not obviously damaged, a duty parent may return and assess the situation. At this time, water, electricity may be shut off, if it is possible and appropriate. Our furnace room is only accessible by the City Staff. We do not have access. Therefore, we cannot turn off the gas.

If damage is obvious and preventing return into the Preschool, then proceed to **Secondary Meeting Place** - **Queen's Park Arena Lobby (as outlined above in section 11.2)** Once the children are sheltered, particularly if there are injuries and/or weather is inclement, decisions can be made as to assessing condition of local preschool parents' homes and sheltering the children there until the children can be returned to their parents or designated caretakers. Remember to liaise with your class representative.

At any time when moving children from one location to another, attempt must be made to leave information behind as to children's whereabouts.

### **General Information on Earthquake Preparedness**

Earthquake Drill – the “drop and cover” method of earthquake protection should be practiced periodically during the school year until the children become quite familiar with it.

Supplies are kept at school for the event of an emergency. They are stored near the exit.

Safety and Emergency Procedures will be incorporated into the Orientation procedure. For more information on Earthquake Preparedness in New Westminster, contact Mark Gajb, Manager Risk Safety, and Emergency Planning Corporation of the City of New Westminster (604-527-4529).

### **Earthquake Comfy Kits**

A list to gather pertinent information in the event of an earthquake will be distributed at the beginning of the year and must be brought in to the Preschool within the first month. Contents of the kit should include:

- The child's name
- The parents' names
- Home address
- Home phone numbers
- Cell phone numbers
- Doctor's name and phone number and health care number
- Allergies and other important information
- A list of adults with phone numbers who could pick up the child
- Change for phone calls (during an emergency, pay phones will work when others may not)
- A photo of the family
- A small toy
- A letter from the parents to the child

The items should be sealed in a large zip lock with the child's name and class written on it.

## **11.4 Searches**

In the event of a missing child, the following stages of search are followed:

### **Stage One**

1. Notice Child is missing.
2. Secure Preschool children at an area designated by the teacher.
3. Two parents and an assistant teacher complete preliminary search of:
  - a. Play area and tunnel;
  - b. Adventure park; and,
  - c. Water park.
4. Assistant takes cell phone.

### **Stage Two**

1. Search moves quickly to the immediate outer perimeter to secure the closest parking lots and First Street.
2. Searchers return to Meeting Area.

3. Police are contacted.
4. Teacher and children return to the Preschool, if they have left.

### Stage Three

1. Searchers, volunteers and Preschool parents search (in teams of 2 – 3) the entire park if possible.
2. Duties for volunteers include:
  - a. Drive roads in Queen's Park area.
  - b. Take down license plate numbers in parking lots.
  - c. Question people in park.

Return to Preschool for update. Do not use Preschool phone unless absolutely necessary.

## 11.5 Security Alarm Procedures

The Preschool is equipped with a monitored security alarm system, which is activated whenever the school is not in use. If you require access to the school after hours (for host duty, month-end clean-up or another purpose) a key and the security alarm code may be obtained from the Vice President.

The following are the procedures for entering and leaving the Preschool after hours and in the event the system is accidentally set off:

- Entering the Preschool.
  - Enter through entrance near cubbies.
  - Turn on light.
  - Immediately enter the alarm code and "1/Off" using keypad (you have 45 seconds).
- Leaving the Preschool.
  - Ensure all windows and exits (including doors near "circle time" area) are closed and locked.
  - Turn off all lights except one to see alarm keypad.
  - Look for green "ready" light on the alarm keypad (if not, check to ensure all doors and windows are closed securely).
  - Enter alarm code (alarm will begin to beep) and press "away."
  - Close door and lock deadbolt with key.
  - Alarm will continue to beep for approximately one minute.
  - If you set the alarm off by mistake.
    - Re-enter code to turn alarm off.
    - Immediately call the alarm company (information provided by Vice President).
    - You will be asked to provide our system number, our password and your name (information also provided by V.P.).

## 11.6 Alarm Responders

The Vice-President at the beginning of the year will coordinate a list of Alarm Responders, to be contacted by the alarm company if the alarm is set off outside of Preschool hours. If they are called at night, Responders should ask that police attend. They should wait outside the building until police arrive and not enter the building alone.

## 12.0 ILLNESSES

The Preschool follows the guidelines set out by the Community Facilities Licensing Board in determining if a child is too sick to attend Preschool. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he or she should not come to school. Similarly, if any of these symptoms develop at school, the parent or caregiver will be contacted so that he or she may take the child home:

- Pain (which is unexplained or undiagnosed)
- Acute cold symptoms
- Difficulty breathing (or wheezing or persistent cough)
- Fever
- Sore throat (difficulty swallowing)
- Infected skin, eyes or undiagnosed rash
- Headache and stiff neck
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Severe itching (body or scalp)
- Communicable disease (known or suspected)

Please do not bring a child to school if they have had a fever in the past 24 hours. Please do not bring a child to school if they have had diarrhea and/or vomiting in the past 48 hours.

## 13.0 MATERNITY LEAVE

An **eight-week** maternity leave beginning no later than the birthdate of the baby will be granted where the parent will be excused from duty days. These days will not be made up. It is the responsibility of the parent taking the maternity leave to arrange this with the class representative.

The class rep must be told within a sufficient period of time to incorporate this into the duty schedule. If she is not given sufficient notice it will be the responsibility of the parent to swap her own duty days.

Each case is individual, but every effort should be made to return to duty as soon as possible. A day will be arranged by the teacher with the parent for her child to have a show-and-tell day during her maternity leave.

If the parent is unable to carry on with her job during her maternity leave, it will be her responsibility to arrange for someone else to do her job. If the parent is unable to attend a General Meeting, then the class representative is to be notified; parents may be excused from one General Meeting during the maternity leave as babies are welcome to attend.

## 14.0 MEDICAL LEAVE

In the event that a medical situation arises and a duty parent cannot fulfill duty requirements, the parent should immediately contact their class representative to arrange a meeting with a member of the personnel committee. The personnel committee will consider each case separately based on the circumstances and make a recommendation to the executive committee on the following:

- Whether a medical leave is warranted and the expected duration of that leave;
- If the leave is warranted, the plan for covering the missed duty and/or general meetings;
- Whether or not the family could fulfill the obligations and requirement to the Preschool in some alternative manner.

Generally, a medical leave would last no longer than four weeks out of fairness to the other families in the class and for the sake of program continuity. After four weeks, the situation is subject to re-evaluation by the class rep and personnel committee.

## 15.0 DEATH IN THE FAMILY LEAVE

In the event that a death in the family situation arises and a duty parent cannot fulfill duty requirements, the parent should immediately contact their class representative to arrange a meeting with a member of the personnel committee. The personnel committee will consider each case separately based on the circumstances and make a recommendation to the executive committee on the following:

- Whether a death in the family leave is warranted and the expected duration of that leave;
- If the leave is warranted, the plan for covering the missed duty and/or general meetings;
- Whether or not the family could fulfill the obligations and requirement to the Preschool in some alternative manner.

Generally, a death in the family leave would last no longer than four weeks out of fairness to the other families in the class and for the sake of program continuity. After four weeks, the situation is subject to re-evaluation by the class rep and personnel committee.

## 16.0 SNOW

QPP will close if it is too dangerous for the teaching staff, students and parents to get to the Preschool. If the teaching staff is unable to get to the Preschool, QPP will be closed.

**Duty Parents:** If you are on duty on a snowy day and uncomfortable with travelling in the snow (and unable to make it to QPP), please call the school and your class rep.

**Student Not Attending:** If you will not be sending your child to school due to snow, please call QPP and your class rep. If too few students are attending, it makes the decision to cancel much easier.

Ideally the decision to close QPP would be decided prior to 7:00am. Closures will be communicated through the emergency phone trees and email. The decision to close will be through discussion of the teacher(s) and the President.

### **This Handbook**

*This Handbook is a guide for Preschool families and collects the practices of our Preschool. It is updated annually under the supervision of the Teachers. When there is a difference between this Handbook and the Preschool's Policy & Procedures or Constitution & Bylaws, the Constitution & Bylaws and Policy & Procedures prevails*