

# ELKFORD PLAYSCHOOL POLICY & INFORMATION HANDBOOK



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## **Elkford Play School Hours of Operation**

Monday to Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Morning Class: 9:00 to 11:30 am

Afternoon Class: 12:15 to 2:45 p.m.

The Elkford Play School is a licensed preschool for potty trained children aged 30 months (turning 3 by the end of the calendar year) to 5 years. The Play School operates from Monday to Thursday, September to May. We are closed for all statutory holidays, public school vacations and in the months of June, July and August. We have an open door policy that invites parents to visit our centre and observe our program. We welcome families from all cultures and encourage them to share their cultural beliefs and customs. Our facility is inclusive – we are committed to supporting children with any physical challenge or special need.

## ***Philosophy***

Elkford Play school philosophy acknowledges and respects the uniqueness of each child. It also supports the belief that a child's strong sense of self-esteem comes from experiencing success with an age appropriate environment enhanced by a rich, stimulating curriculum. The curriculum engages children's learning in all developmental areas, while at the same time allows for individual differences in learning styles and encourages creativity through a variety of play-based experiences. Our overall goals for the children in our program are: a strong sense of self-confidence and self-esteem, development of the whole child with emphasis on social/emotional skills and independence. Specifically, these include:

### ***Development of Self Confidence and Self Esteem***

- Positive identity and self respect
- Trust
- Empowerment to make choices
- Taking initiative
- Mastery
- Expressing creativity
- Willingness to risk
- Feeling autonomous and self reliant

### ***Development of the Whole Child***

- Social/emotional skills
- Communication skills
- Language development
- Physical skills
- Intellectual abilities/cognitive skills
- Creativity

### ***Development of Social/emotional Skills***

- Problem solving and conflict resolution

Cooperating in play and work  
Developing trust in peers and adults  
Belonging to and participating in groups  
Becoming a leader and a follower  
Expressing feelings  
Developing good listening skills  
Making friends, being friends and sharing friends  
Having fun!

### ***The Values and Goals we use to implement our Philosophy***

- Maintain a SAFE, supportive, and stimulating environment
- Facilitate learning through play
- Respect children's uniqueness and recognize and celebrate their individual differences
- Create a trusting, predictable environment
- Development of an environment that says "YES" to exploring, experimenting
- Discovering, having fun with friends and being a child
- Emphasis on the "process" (which is the immersion in the "doing") rather than the "product"
- Use of positive language
- Model empathy and compassion
- Encourage children to take risks
- Help children make a balance of choices
- Keep a sense of humour and create laughter
- Provide a "child-centered program" which evolves from the interests of the children as well as successfully planned and implemented units
- Cultivate curriculum which is continually developed and revised to insure a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences for children

## ***Curriculum***

The playschool has a rich and broad curriculum including:

Alphabet recognition	Pre writing
Science	Counting
Cooking	Art
Music	Outdoor play
Group time	Large motor skill building
Dramatic play	Block play
Small group learning activities	Quality literature
Field trips	Fine motor skills

## ***Schedule***

2 day or 3 day program

Arrival – transition from outdoor wear to indoor wear

Circle – attendance, sharing, show and tell etc

Free play – play with toys and peers in room

Art – either as small groups or together as a class. Optional or mandatory

Clean up

Circle - calendar, weather, learning, science, book reading

Hand washing/bathroom break

Snack

Gross motor/group time/outside play

Home

## ***Discipline***

Guidance consists of direct and indirect actions used by the adults to help children develop socially acceptable behaviour. Effectively, positive guidance maintains the child's self-esteem and produces growth and desired changes in the child's behaviour. The long term goal of guidance is inner self control.

- Teachers provide a respectful, supportive climate in which children are helped to make decisions, observe the consequences of their actions and take responsibility for their own behaviour.
- We never physically discipline or physically punish children at any time. If the child's behaviour becomes an area of concern, the supervisor will discuss this with the parents(s)/guardian. A solution agreeable to the supervisor and the parent(s)/guardian will be sought.

Discipline following unacceptable behaviour will consist of the following actions:

- Discuss appropriate behaviour expected in class
- If unacceptable behaviour continues the teacher will help the child come up with some positive solutions to his/her problem
- A child may be asked to choose a different activity if behaviour persists

## **Communication**

### **Parent Concerns**

Concerns raised by parents or guardians involving their child's classroom experience should be resolved as quickly as possible. Parents/guardians are urged to discuss their concerns directly with the supervisor when the concern surfaces. Please talk to the supervisor or call to set up a time to meet after school hours. If the concern is not resolved at this level, the parent/guardian should then discuss the matter with the Executive Director Kim Bauer (Elkford Women's Task Force Society) 250-865-2031.

### **Newsletters**

Every month a newsletter will be emailed to every family. The newsletter contains reminders, monthly themes, special days/activities, dates to remember and upcoming events.

### **Changes to child's information**

Please inform Elkford Preschool of any changes to your address, phone number, your child's allergies etc as soon as possible so we can update their files accordingly.

## **Administration**

Mailing address:  
Elkford Playschool  
PO Box 742  
Elkford, B.C.  
V0B 1H0  
Phone: 250-433-1863

Street Address:  
Elkford Community Conference Centre  
750 Fording Drive

Title Name		
Executive Director	Kim Bauer	250-865-2031
Early Childhood Educator/Manager	Becky Andrusiak	250-433-1863
Assistant	Lorraine Haukaas	250-433-1863

Email [becky.andrusiak@gmail.com](mailto:becky.andrusiak@gmail.com)  
Email [ewtf@telus.net](mailto:ewtf@telus.net)

### **Attendance and Reporting Absences**

Attendance is taken daily in the classroom. If your child will be absent you can notify the teacher by phoning or texting the playschool or emailing. If texting please state your name and your child's as we won't be storing all numbers in the phone.

## Health Policies

BC Licensing requires that each child have an updated immunization record on their file. Your child's health is important to his/her general wellbeing. We need to be aware of any physically limiting or potentially life threatening conditions which may cause your child harm if improperly handled. A care plan may be required in some circumstances.

Observable symptoms: If your child has any of the following observable symptoms he/she should **not** be sent to school. **Children should be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to class.**

Diarrhea	Severe Coughing
Difficult or rapid breathing	Yellowish skin or eyes
Pinkeye	Unusual spots or rashes
Sore throat and trouble swallowing	Infected skin patch(es)
Unusually colored urine or stool	Headache and stiff neck
Vomiting	Loss of appetite
Severe itching of body or scalp	Temperature over 37.5 or 99 degrees
Severe nasal/sinus congestion	

**Please report all communicable diseases to play school staff. Also, report any case of head lice as quickly as possible.**

## Medications

Medication should be given at home before and after school, providing this meets with the physician's approval.

Children are not to handle or transport medication in any way. Any child who is regularly receiving medication should have the medication noted on the child's registration application; which should be updated as needed.

Any child who is prescribed an asthma inhaler or epi pen (in case of emergencies), may be assisted by playschool staff if the playschool receives:

- 1 – A written statement from such physician detailing the method, amount, and time schedules by which such medication is to be taken
- 2 – A written statement from the parent or guardian of the child indicating the desire that the playschool assist the child in the matters set forth in the physician's statement

All medication must be in the original prescription container with the pharmacy label including the date dispensed, physician's name, student's name, medication and instructions for administering the medication

## **Snacks**

We encourage healthy snacks that are **PEANUT FREE** and raisin/craisin free (cheese & crackers, meat, fruit, veggies, yogurt are some examples). Please send a water bottle filled with water – no other beverages please – to school every class. Please cut all grapes and other small snack items in half to prevent choking.

## **Clothing**

Children need to wear clothing appropriate for the weather outside – this will allow us to take in nature and be comfortable and safe. During the winter months outdoor winter gear (snow pants, jacket, hat and mitts) should be brought to class every day.

We are a playschool so at times we may get messy – please do not send your child in any clothing you do not want to get ruined.

Every child is required to have a pair of indoor shoes – a cubby will be designated to your child to store their shoes.

## **Emergency and Disaster Information**

- In case of a disaster such as a gas leak or a prolonged power outage, a parent or emergency contact person will be contacted to pick up the child.
- Fire disaster drills are held every month throughout the year and the children are familiarized with all emergency procedures.
- In the event of a fire or evacuation we will be meeting in our safe zone at the Elkford District Office – 816 Michel Road, 250-865-4000. We will contact you or your designate to pick up your child.
- First aid and emergency supplies are stored in class in case of emergency. Should a child become ill or have an accident, parents or person listed as the emergency contact will be contacted.

Every child needs to have an emergency pack at school. This consists of a clean set of clothing (pants, shirt, underwear, socks), a non-perishable snack and a small toy/book/comfort item. Place all items in a Ziploc bag and label with your child's name. These will be stored at the preschool and will go home at the end of every school year. This is a licensing requirement for our facility.

## **Emergency Plan**

Parents are provided with a copy of the Emergency Plan. There are five exits from the classroom, four of which exit directly to the exterior of the building. In a rare event that we are evacuated or required to shelter in place the Elkford Play School staff would be in close contact with Elkford Emergency Service and the Elkford Community Disaster Response Committee.

## **Immediate Evacuation Procedure**

When the fire alarm sounds or notice of immediate evacuation is given to staff, children are instructed to stop what they are doing and line up single file at the first exit on the playground side of the Play School. If for some reason this exit is unusable staff will line children up at the exit used for normal entrance into the Play School. The Play School Teacher will commence a head count to confirm that all children and staff are present and accounted for. The Play School Assistant will turn off all lights; retrieve the first aid kit, attendance record and binder containing child files. The Play School Teacher will then lead all the children out the exit with the Play School Assistant at the end of the line. Children will follow staff from the room, across the playground, out the gate, across the parking lot and proceed to the stairs leading to the sidewalk facing Fording Drive. At this time another head count will occur. Once it is confirmed that all children and staff have safely evacuated the facility a call to the appropriate emergency services will be placed by calling 911. If emergency services determines that it is unsafe for children to return to the facility Play School staff will accompany children to our SAFE ZONE – Elkford District Office located at 816 Michel Road. The Executive Director will be contacted at the arrival at the SAFE ZONE and informed of the situation. Parent or emergency contacts will be contacted once children and program staff have safely reached our SAFE ZONE. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANYONE RETURN TO THE BUILDING UNTIL IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY EMERGENCY SERVICES THAT IT IS SAFE TO DO SO.

## **Shelter in Place**

In extremely rare circumstances, such as a chemical spill, it may become necessary to shelter children in place at the Elkford Play School. B.C. Licensing requires that we develop and share our plan for sheltering in place with parents/guardians. Once program staff receives notification that a shelter in place order has been given they will gather all children and program staff in the Elkford Play School room. The Play School Assistant will retrieve emergency supplies from the storage room located in the Play School. The Play School Teacher will remain with the children. Once the Play School Assistant retrieves emergency supplies the Play School Teacher will contact the District of Elkford and notify them to turn off ventilation and heating systems. The Play School Teacher will assemble the children in a circle in the middle of the room and calmly explain what is happening. The children will be frightened and require extra reassurance and the Teacher should be prepared for this. The Play School Assistant will then close and lock all windows and doors, close off non-essential rooms (i.e. storage and bathrooms) and seal gaps around windows and doors with pre-cut plastic and duct tape. The Assistant will then place damp towels at the bottom of door openings. The Assistant will then return to the children and Teacher. The Teacher will contact the Executive Director to inform her about the situation. The Teacher will then contact parents or emergency contacts to explain what is happening. Parents will be instructed to listen to the local radio station for further instructions. Staff and children will only exit the building when instructed to do so by emergency services.

In order to be fully prepared for emergencies, the Play School will store the following emergency supplies:

Bottled Water	Toilet paper
Blankets	Garbage bags
Dry or canned food that is easily prepared	Disposable wipes
Medications required by children with allergies	Flash lights and batteries
A battery powered radio	Pen and paper
First aid kit	Candles with matches
Paper cups and plates	Whistle

Each child will have in place a comfort kit that is assembled by parents and contains the following items:

A picture or letter from home, change of clothes, non-perishable snack, a small book or toy. The kit will be contained in a small plastic bag labelled with the child's name and will be returned to parents at the completion of the school year.

Once again, staff is reminded that children will be frightened and want to be with their family. Staff must provide a comforting, reassuring and safe environment at all times.

All communication will be the responsibility of the Play School Teacher.

IHA Licensing should be contacted after parents and the Executive Director have been notified of an evacuation order or shelter in place order.

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation or shelter in place the Play School staff is **ALWAYS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFE CARE OF THE CHILDREN** until a parent, emergency contact or designated alternate picks up the child.

### **Resuming Program Following an Evacuation or Shelter in Place**

The Elkford Play School will only begin to operate after a thorough inspection has been completed and it has been deemed safe for the program to operate again. Before commencing operation a parent meeting will be held to go over the events that occurred, the program response, and provide opportunity for parent feedback. Parents will also be reminded that children may be frightened to return and require additional reassurance.

## **Tuition Billing**

For September entry, nine postdated cheques payable to the Elkford Women's Task Force Society (EWTFS) dated September 1<sup>st</sup> thru May 1<sup>st</sup> are required. Our playschool program runs September thru May every year. If we have not received payment of fees and/or if a cheque has non-sufficient funds your child will not be able to attend the playschool the following month. There will also be a \$6 fee charged for each NSF cheque. In order for your child to return to the program we must receive all outstanding fees and the fees owing for the current month. In the case that the playschool has other children on a waiting list and we have not received payment of fees by the last class day of the month, your child's spot at the playschool will be given to the next child on the waiting list.

## **Subsidy**

Does your child qualify to receive subsidy? Please check the website to see if they do. <https://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy>

## **Change of Enrollment Status**

If it becomes necessary to withdraw your child from the Elkford Playschool, one month's notice in writing to the Elkford Playschool staff is required.

## **Professional Development**

To ensure that your child receives continuous quality education the Elkford Playschool teachers participate in three professional development days a year.

## **Holidays**

We follow the same statutory holidays as School District 5. If other unscheduled holidays arise they will be stated in the monthly newsletters and again in a reminder email.

## **Dismissal, Drop off, Late pick-up, Safe release**

We ask that your child be delivered personally into the playschool and be picked up by you or your designate stated on the registration form. We **must** have written permission to let your child leave with another person.

We ask that you or your designate pick your child up at the appropriate dismissal time. Morning classes are dismissed at 11:30 am and afternoon classes are dismissed at 2:45 pm.

### **Late Pick-up Policy**

If you or your designate have not arrived at the playschool to pick-up your child five minutes after class a **\$5.00 late pick-up fee** will be applied for every five minutes you or your designate are late.

If you or your designate are continually late (more than three times), an additional **\$25 late fee** will be charged to you every time you are late there after.

### **Safe Release**

If we feel you or your designate is unable to adequately care for your child upon pick up we will:

1. Ask your permission to let us call your designate to come pick you and/or your child up.
2. If you choose not to accept our help, we will contact proper authorities; ie RCMP.

## **Child Abuse**

The Child, Family and Community Services Act states that all children in the Province of British Columbia “are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect, and harm or threat of harm.” As care givers and citizens we are required to report any child that:

- Has been, or is likely to be physically harmed, neglected, sexually abused or exploited, or emotionally harmed by the child’s parents.
- Is deprived of necessary health care, food, shelter, or clothing
- The parent is unwilling or unable to provide protection for the child from another person who presents a danger to the child.

***If we suspect any child abuse we will contact the Ministry of Children and Families.***

***If parents suspect any abuse or neglect in the Elkford Playschool contact the Community Care Licensing – 250-420-2230***

## **General Information**

### **Smoking**

Smoking is prohibited in both the Elkford Playschool and the Elkford Community Conference Centre

### **Field Trips**

Children may have field trips to various points of interest throughout the program year. By signing the parent agreement you give consent for your child to participate in field trips, walks and educational excursions included in the Elkford Playschool curriculum.

### **Bringing Things to School**

Children need to leave personal toys at home. If a child needs a security item (such as a blanket or stuffed animal) it must fit into a backpack. Children are asked to keep that item in their backpack during school hours. Arrangements can be made with the teacher to share items that are brought back from a special trip, cultural experience or other special event items. Show and Tell days are also scheduled monthly to allow all children to bring a special item to share with the class. These are announced in the newsletters.

### **If your child becomes ill**

If a child becomes ill while under the care of the Elkford Playschool we will contact the parent(s) or other designated emergency contact person to come to pick up the child. We will provide, in the community care facility, a quiet and clean resting area for the child, and ensure that the child is under the close supervision of a responsible adult until such a time as a parent or their designate arrive to pick up the sick child.

## **Notification of Illness or Injury**

We will immediately notify a parent or emergency contact if, while under the care and supervision the child (a) becomes ill or is injured, or (b) is involved in, or may have been involved in, a reportable incident or has a reportable communicable disease.

## ***Refund Policy***

The Elkford Playschool generally does not provide refunds of fees for classes that your child may miss. If your child becomes ill and is not able to attend Playschool for more than eight (8) consecutive classes in a calendar month as a result of illness a refund may be provided. A note from a medical doctor confirming your child's illness will be required before a refund is provided.

If you are withdrawing your child from the Elkford Playschool thirty (30) days written notice is required. For withdrawals in which less than 30 days written notice is provided your cheque for fees for the following month will be cashed and any remaining cheques will be returned to the issuer of the post-dated cheques. If thirty (30) days written notice is provided any post-dated cheques held by the Elkford Women's Task Force Society for payment of fees will be returned to the issuer of the post-dated cheques on the last day your child is scheduled to attend class.

## ***Special Days***

The Elkford Playschool does celebrate special days (Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter and Teddy Bear Picnic). These celebrations are held as part of class and are themed to match the special day. Parents are asked to provide snacks for the class on these special days. We ask that parents take turn by indicating on the posted sign-up sheet whether they are able to provide a healthy snack or treat for the special day. We typically ask for 2 healthy snacks and 2 treats per special day. There may be food allergies that parents providing snacks need to be aware of. Food allergies will be posted on the sign-up sheet.

In cases when children may not be able to partake in the group snack due to special dietary concerns, food allergies or sensitivities parents are encouraged to provide a snack for their child on special days. Our primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of your child. Our staff is aware of food allergies and dietary concerns and is vigilant in making sure your child does not eat something they shouldn't.

Just a reminder that the Elkford Playschool is a peanut free preschool. Please feel free to ask our staff if you have any questions or require further clarification.

## ***Code of Ethics***

- The school accepts children regardless of race, religion, sex, social background or appearance
- Respects cultural practices or ideals of different families
- Communicate respectfully and honestly with parents on issues regarding their children
- Ensure complete confidentiality with regards to information on the child and the family
- Inform parents in advance of any changes in the routine or school schedule
- Encourage the love and well-being of the child and family
- Be receptive to advice and suggestions to help improve performance
- Welcome parent participation and input towards progressive ideas
- Keep abreast of current practices and procedures

We are looking forward to a great year! Thank you for taking the time to inform yourself about Elkford Playschool policies. This will help ensure your child and you have a fun and productive year at the playschool.