



PARENT HANDBOOK: 3/4'S MORNING CLASS AND OUTDOORS CLASS

Dunbar Memorial Preschool Philosophy of Education

To create a safe and enriching play-based learning environment through the cooperative efforts of families, educators and community leaders.

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INTRODUCTION AND PHILOSOPHY

Dunbar Memorial Preschool (DMP) is a non-profit, parent involvement preschool. The executive committee, made up of parents whose children are currently enrolled at DMP, manage the preschool. Our teachers, Early Childhood Educators, plan and run the preschool program. We have provided early childhood education in the Dunbar community for over 50 years. In 2014, we received a Child Care Legacy Award, which recognizes licensed childcare facilities that have provided more than 40 years of service.

Our core philosophy is that children learn best through play. Our teachers follow the children's lead in order to gauge their interests, and work to provide a warm and stimulating environment. This approach encourages the holistic development and growth of the child, fostering their cognitive, creative, physical, social, and emotional development. We have immediate access to a large outdoor playground and forested area. During rainy weather, the classroom provides a large area for gross motor development (please see our active play policy attached to the end of this handbook).

Our core program runs Monday to Thursday mornings, 9:15am-12:15pm, for three and four year olds.

Our drop off 2's programs take place on Friday mornings from 9:-10:30am and 10:45am to 12:15pm.

Outdoor class is offered on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:00pm-2:30pm.

Children registered in both the morning program and outdoor program on Wednesdays/Thursdays may eat lunch in the classroom, with teacher supervision.

Our calendar follows the Vancouver School Board calendar, including public holidays and Winter and Spring Break, but we do not have professional days.

DAILY ROUTINE

Below is a general overview of how most days are structured at the preschool:

3/4's Class – Monday to Thursday Mornings 9:15am-12:15pm

9:15-9:30am:	Circle (group) time
9:30-10:55am:	Free play and explorations based on children's interests
10:55-11:05am:	Group snack
11:05-12:05pm:	Gross motor play, games, music and movement either outside or in the gross motor side of classroom (children will go outdoors many days, so please send rain/cold/warm weather clothing and accessories as appropriate)
12:05-12:15pm:	Group time goodbye

Outdoor Class – Wednesday and Thursday Afternoons 1:00pm-2:30pm

1:00-2:15pm:	Exploration outdoors based on children's interests
2:15-2:30pm:	Walk back to Dunbar Community Centre
2:30pm:	Parents sign out outside and pick up

DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Drop Off

The drop off process involves signing your child in, providing a contact number and name, and ensuring your child washes their hands at the sink. Each child has a cubby where they can leave their coat and belongings. Once ready, everyone meets for group time on the carpet.

Pick Up

Please sign your child out and take home any necessary belongings.

GRADUAL ENTRY

Sometimes a new experience like starting preschool can create feelings of fear or nervousness in young children. The teachers at DMP want to help your child settle into preschool so that it is a positive experience and something they look forward to. This might occur quite quickly for your child or he or she might need some more time to adjust. Gradual entry allows your child to come to school for increasing lengths of time to ease them into the experience. Gradual entry is during the first week of preschool classes for new 3 and 4 year olds. Gradual entry is optional and you will know your child best as to whether they require more or less time to settle in.

If your child attends our school for 3 or 4 days a week, the suggested gradual entry schedule is as follows:

1st day: 1 hour from 9:15-10:15am
2nd day: 1.5 hours from 9:15-10:45am
3rd day: 2.5 hours from 9:15-11:15am
4th day: Full class

If your child attends 2 days a week, the suggested gradual entry schedule is as follows:

1st day: 1 hour from 9:15-10:15am
2nd day: 2 hours from 9:15-11:15am (attending full classes the following week)

ILLNESS

Children in preschool programs are particularly susceptible to infections. With this in mind, we ask that any child too ill to participate in the normal activities of the preschool be kept at home. If your child has a fever, please do not return your child to preschool until 24 hours after the fever has passed. In cases of gastrointestinal problems (diarrhea, vomiting etc), please keep your child home for at least 48 hours after all symptoms have subsided. If your child has a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, mumps, pink eye, hand foot mouth, whooping cough, head lice etc, please keep your child at home and inform the preschool immediately, whereby we will advise of further instructions. Good hand washing will protect your children from many childhood illnesses. The teachers and parents regularly clean toys and work surfaces to reduce the spread of illness.

ATTENDANCE

If you have any planned absences, please let the teachers know as far in advance as possible. If your child is sick, please inform the preschool by phone (604-222-6065) that they will be absent. Please leave a voicemail if no one is available to answer the phone. You may also let the teachers know at dunbarteachers@gmail.com.

OUTDOOR CLASS AND OUTDOORS GROSS MOTOR PLAY

During Wednesday and Thursday afternoon outdoor class, children explore the wooded area near Memorial Park and surrounding areas and are encouraged to follow their own interests. We explore, wonder, discover, and build a meaningful connection with nature. Rain or shine, we share stories, collect natural treasures, and have lots of fun!

If the weather presents an unsafe environment for the children, it will be cancelled on the affected day (i.e. high winds, heavy snowfall, lightning). The teachers will provide as much notice as possible; however, the class will not be refunded.

Outdoor class happens in all weather, which means appropriate clothing is key. Wearing comfortable clothing allows the children to explore and engage with their environment. Here is a list of suggested items:

When it is raining:

- Dress in layers
- Rain jacket
- Rain pants (or a one piece “muddy buddy”)
- Boots
- Warm socks
- An extra set of clothes may be needed for pick up

When it is cold:

- Gloves instead of mittens make it easier for children to use their hands
- Toque

When it is warm:

- Hat
- Sunscreen

The above list is also handy for the morning preschool days when the children go outdoors for gross motor play after snack time.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

DMP is a parent involvement preschool. Parents find involvement in the preschool satisfying, and a great way to contribute to their child's first school experience. Parents are involved in five main ways: snack duty, parent job, attending meetings/parent education sessions, silent auction fundraising and bi-annual cleaning.

Snack Duty

Sitting down and sharing the same healthy snack together is an important part of our day. Children are more willing to try new foods and often encourage each other to try new foods when they eat together. Each day, one parent is responsible for snack duty. When on snack duty, the parent will prepare and provide a nutritious snack for the students to eat and clean up the snack at the end of the day. Parents take turns preparing and bringing snack for the entire class. The snack calendar will be emailed to you when school starts and you can sign up for the days that suit your schedule. Each term, you will usually be responsible for as many snack days as your child attends class per week. For example, if your child attends 2 days a week, you will have 2 snack duty days per term. Each school year will have two to three terms depending on the number of families enrolled each year. Children love being the 'snack child' and the special privileges that come with it (announcement of who brought snack today etc).

In addition to making and cleaning up snack, the snack parent should put the DMP sandwich board (located beside the front desk of the Community Centre) outside the main entrance when arriving for preschool that day and put it away when picking up.

Please note that Dunbar Memorial Preschool follows a strict NO NUT policy.

When bringing snack, parents should provide the following each time:

- 2-3 servings of fruit
- 1-2 servings of vegetables
- 1 serving of cheese
- 1 serving of crackers

Additionally, children love seaweed, so some parents provide this as a "bonus" item in addition to the above. Please do not send cookies, popcorn, sweet crackers or candy as part of snack.

Snack Suggestions

The following is a suggested list of foods – however, feel free to be creative and bring in new items for children to try. If you are feeling adventurous with one item, please ensure that the other items you provide are more conventional so that children will have something to fall back on if they are unwilling to try the new food.

Fruits: Apples, pineapple, blueberries, bananas, oranges, plums, grapes, pears, peaches, cantaloupe, strawberries, honeydew, watermelon, kiwi

Vegetables: Carrots, broccoli, bell pepper strips, cucumber, celery, edamame, cauliflower, cherry tomatoes

Crackers: Please check the ingredient list to ensure they are **NUT FREE**. We encourage whole grain, healthy crackers for snack. We discourage high salt or high sugar crackers such as goldfish or animal crackers. Please bring at least one package of crackers.

Snack Preparation

You will need the following (which are all available in the preschool kitchen):

- Cutting Board
- Knife
- Peeler
- 2 Large Snack Trays
- 8-10 Serving Plates
- 2 Tongs
- Kids' Plates
- Kids' Cups
- Kids' Placemats
- 1 - 2 Water Pitchers
- Clean Up Bin
- Trolley

Directions:

1. Ensure a sterile workspace by clearing clutter from preparation counter, and then wipe the counter with the dish soap solution, followed by the bleach solution.
2. Wash or peel your fruits and vegetables. Cut into small pieces. Round items such as grapes or carrots should be cut in half lengthwise, to prevent choking.
3. Cut cheese into small slices or cubes. Cheese strings are fine too.
4. Place fruit, vegetables, cheese, and crackers onto 8-10 serving plates. Place the serving plates on the snack trays (see picture on kitchen wall) and then put everything on the trolley.
5. Place tongs atop the prepared snack; one set of tongs per tray.
6. Place the kids' plates, kids' cups, 1 or 2 water pitchers filled with tap water and kids' placemats beside the snack arrangement.
7. Place the clean up bin on the bottom shelf of the trolley.
8. Teachers will serve the snack at snack time.
9. Please come back at 12:00-12:05pm for clean up. If dishwasher is full and clean, empty it. Then place the kids' cups, kids' plates, serving plates, water pitchers, tongs and cutting board into the dishwasher, add detergent, and start the dishwasher. Wash the knives, peeler, and any other dishes by hand. Wipe down the counters and leave the kitchen in a clean condition ready for the next day's snack parent.

When attending preschool orientation in September, a snack demonstration will be held so parents can see how food is to be prepared and how large a serving size should be.

Snack for Special Events

Birthdays will be celebrated in class by the teachers in a healthy manner. If you wish to provide a food treat on that day, please do so at the END of class so that parents have the option of deciding whether their child will partake in the treat and to assess whether there are any food allergens. An excellent alternative if you want to celebrate is to provide a non-food item such as pencils or stickers. There is no requirement or expectation that caregivers be required to provide anything on their children's birthdays.

During class parties or special days when outside food is permitted, the teachers will advise parents on what to bring.

Parent Jobs

One of the strengths of DMP is the active involvement of parents. Our preschool is run by parents, for the parents and children of our community. Your involvement by completing your parent job to the best of your ability is essential to the success of our preschool. Everyone's role is valued and needed. Parents will be asked to choose a job from our parent job list. Jobs range from housekeeping to fundraising to taking on an executive position such as treasurer.

Meetings and Parent Education

General Meetings (GM's) are usually held every two months on the first Wednesday at St. Philips Church in Dunbar (3737 West 27th Avenue). General meetings begin at 7pm sharp. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is usually the first Wednesday in June. At GM's, our supervisor teacher will speak briefly about what has been happening in the classroom. We will also discuss and vote on preschool business (budget, schedules for next year, upcoming events, etc). Attendance is important so your voice about the running of our preschool can be heard. New ideas are also discussed. For example, our outdoor class was launched within a month after the discussion of implementation at a GM meeting. Your involvement is greatly appreciated. Executive members meet once a month to discuss preschool business. All parents are welcome to attend these evening meetings.

One major benefit of being a member of our preschool is that it is FREE to attend parent education seminars which are presented by well known speakers on topics of parenting or child development. Usually, the seminars follow the GM and are shared with the Crown and Tom Thumb preschools. They begin at 7:30 pm and last approximately 1.5 hours long. When space is available, we open these nights to the public for a fee.

Attendance at GMs (especially the AGM) and parent education evenings is expected.

Fundraising

DMP is a non for profit preschool and relies every year on a Silent Auction as our primary fundraiser. Parent participation in this event is essential. Each November/December, we hold a Silent Auction. Fundraising dollars are used towards 'extra' operating costs of the school, such as fixing and upgrading equipment, field trips and school supplies. Parents are expected to provide two items for the silent auction, which can be done by canvassing local businesses for donations, or providing any items you have on hand that are appropriate, such as unused gift certificates, weekends at a family cabin, hockey tickets, handmade items, etc.

Depending on the interest of families, we sometimes hold smaller fundraising campaigns such as family portrait sessions, poinsettias, gift cards, and Mabel's Labels.

We understand that fundraising is not for everyone, so therefore, DMP also provides an option for parents to "opt out" of the fundraising process. By making a one-time Direct Donation (as of 2019/2020 it was \$200), families can easily provide their fundraising support in a single payment at the beginning of the school year. After making the Direct Donation, you would not be expected to participate in any further fundraising activities for the rest of the year, though you would be welcome to do so. The deadline for opting to make a Direct Donation in lieu of other fundraising activities is the October general meeting. DMP also gratefully welcomes other donations of any amount. Tax receipts will be provided for donations greater than \$25.

Bi-Annual Preschool Clean Up Sessions

Twice a year, in December and in June, DMP families and teachers roll up their sleeves for 'clean up sessions.' Each family will be responsible for cleaning up a portion of the classroom and/or taking home some toys to clean. These more thorough clean ups allow our children to play more safely and healthily in our classroom.

Volunteering

In addition to the parent involvement mentioned above, parents may choose to volunteer in the classroom. If parents are interested in volunteering, please speak to the teachers or to any member of the executive team. Additionally, if you have any special skills or background you feel may be of interest to the students, please feel free to discuss this with the teachers. In the past, we have had enriching activities such as a parent nurse giving a talk when the children were doing a unit on human bodies, and a special Chinese New Year celebration.

Criminal Record Check

It is a licensing requirement that volunteers in the classroom complete a criminal record check. This check is free for volunteers and only takes a few minutes to complete online. An individual's criminal record history is reviewed against the list of relevant or specified offences only and specifically as applicable in determining the risk that an individual may pose in a position where they work with children. It is not a full criminal record check.

School Events

Throughout the school year, exciting activities and events are planned in and out of class. Even if your child does not attend on the day an event is scheduled, they are welcome to attend with a parent or caregiver's supervision. Examples of events that we celebrate are various holiday parties, Mother's Day, Father's Day, etc.

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Food Safety

Our preschool has procedures regarding food safety and allergies. Snack must be prepared at preschool, with all preparation surfaces and serving tables being properly sanitized. If your child has food allergies, please notify the school at registration.

Outdoor Safety

Teachers are trained to ensure the safety of the students when the children are outside during the regular class and the outdoor class. Please notify the school if your child has special needs for outside play.

Emergency/Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency that requires an evacuation (i.e. power outage, fire, earthquake, etc), the teachers will bring the students to one of two emergency locations:

- Outdoor location: baseball diamond / playground behind the Dunbar Community Centre
- Indoor location (in case of rain): Dunbar Library (closed Mondays) or Kokopelli Café

Teachers will bring the following:

- Classroom binder (has current parent contact info)
- Outdoor first aid kit (in green backpack)
- Comfort kits for the class

In case of a severe emergency, teachers will also bring a 'grab and go' emergency kit and/or 2 large emergency bins (grey/black garbage cans on wheels with 3 days of emergency supplies).

Once children are safe and settled, a teacher will call the parents/caregivers to inform them of the location for picking up the students.

Comfort Kits

DMP has a Comfort Kit Program. In the event of a disaster such as an earthquake, each student will have a prepared Ziploc bag filled with items to comfort them while they await pickup by their family or caregiver. Comfort Kits are stored in a mesh stuff sac in the back room, for quick access in case of emergency.

Important to know:

- Keep the kit as small and light as possible
- Bring the kit to the classroom by the SECOND FRIDAY after school begins

Recommended items to include in your child's Comfort Kit:

- A recent photo of your family and/or any significant people in your child's life
- A small personal item which may comfort your child (i.e. small blanket, stuffed animal, cards, crayons, a small toy, favourite book, etc.)
- NO BATTERY POWERED TOYS
- A short letter of comfort and reassurance to your child from you
- A space blanket (silver foil) and glow sticks
- Small package of tissue and/or wipes
- No food or drinks (The school has a large Earthquake Kit that contains enough drinks, water and food for at least three days.)

FIELD TRIPS

Occasional field trips linked to the students' interests will occur throughout the school year. A caregiver is expected to accompany the child. You can make arrangements to have your child supervised by another parent/caregiver on these outings. Even if your child does not attend on the day the field trip is scheduled for, they are welcome to attend with a caregiver's supervision.

TOILET TRAINING

We recognize that some children will still be potty training when attending preschool and that accidents will occur occasionally. The classroom has a few sets of "emergency clothing" for that purpose. Please wash the "emergency clothing" and bring it back to the classroom. Please also keep an extra set of clothes at school in your child's cubby.

Teachers will assist in pee accidents quickly and discretely. Bowel accidents and bowel movements (including in a diaper) are the responsibility of the parent/caregiver. Teachers will call the parent or contact person on the sign in sheet if this occurs. If your child is in a diaper/Pull-up, a parent or caregiver must be within 5 minutes of the preschool. This is to ensure that in case of bowel movements, your child will be changed in a timely fashion.

COMMUNICATION

Communication With The Teachers

Parent-teacher interviews occur once a year. Should you have questions or concerns about your child outside of this time, please speak with the teachers in a timely manner. You can e-mail them at dunbarteachers@gmail.com or ask during drop-off/pick-up to arrange a time to meet. Appointments are necessary, as teachers are busy with the children during class time.

Communication With The Executive Team

Should you have questions, concerns, or suggestions about the running of the preschool, please speak to one of executive members or email them at exec.preschool@gmail.com.

Login to Parents' Website

As a member of the preschool, you will need to log in to our Parents' Website, which can be accessed from our public website. You will be given access through your own email account.

REGISTRATION AND WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES

Drop In

If space permits, part-time students can drop in for \$30/class. Our maximum class size is 16 students with 2 teachers, and this cannot be exceeded due to our licensing regulations. Please ask the teachers beforehand to ensure drop in space is available.

Changes To Morning Registration

To change the number of days of attendance or the days you are attending, submit requests in writing to the Enrolment Chair at dunbarpreschoolinfo@gmail.com with a minimum of one clear **calendar** month's notice. For example, if a request is received on October 1, the changes will take effect on November 1. However, if a request is received on October 5, the changes will not take effect until December 1. Requests to reduce the number of days of attendance will not be accommodated after March 31 of the current school year. Whether a request is accepted or denied will depend on availability.

Withdrawal – 3/4's Morning Class

All requests for withdrawal from the morning 3/4's class need to be made in writing to the Enrolment Chair at dunbarpreschoolinfo@gmail.com with a minimum of one clear **calendar** month's notice. For example, if a request is received on October 1, the changes will take effect on November 1. However, if a request is received on October 5, the changes will not take effect until December 1. Withdrawal requests received after March 31 of the current school year will receive no refund in tuition fees. Please note that the deposit paid upon registration, which consists of one month's tuition and a Council of Parent Participation Preschools in BC fee, is **non-refundable**. Any remaining tuition refundable to the parent will be pro-rated.

Withdrawal – Outdoor Class

All requests for withdrawal from the afternoon outdoor class need to be made in writing to the Enrolment Chair at dunbarpreschoolinfo@gmail.com with a minimum of one clear **calendar** month's notice. For example, if a request is received on October 1, the changes will take effect on November 1. However, if a request is received on October 5, the changes will not take effect until December 1. Withdrawal requests received after March 31 of the current school year will receive no refund in tuition fees. Please note that the Council of Parent Participation Preschools in BC fee paid upon registration is **non-refundable**. Any remaining tuition refundable to the parent will be pro-rated.

ACTIVE PLAY POLICY

Dunbar Memorial Preschool adheres to the Director of Licensing Standard of Practice, set out in Section (4) (1) (e) of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.

Active play is physical activity that embodies temperate to brisk bursts of energy. It can be the movement of running or jumping which raises the children's heart rate.

Active play is important as it helps to promote healthy body growth and development, and supports body control and movement. Active play supports strong bones and muscles, enhances balance and coordination and helps with the development of gross and fine motor skills.

As a licensed Preschool care program that runs between 2-3 hours, the amount of Active Play that we must ensure is a minimum of 30 minutes, which can be indoor active play, outdoor active play or the combination of both.

Unfacilitated Play or Free Play

Unfacilitated play or free play is self-directed by the child, and is comprised of self-led movements and activities. To support this unfacilitated play indoors at Dunbar Memorial Preschool, our program has space for building block towers and a large open space for riding bikes, running, jumping, dancing, basketball, soccer, and hockey. For outdoor play, children engage in unfacilitated free play at the playground behind our preschool at Memorial West Park.

Facilitated Play

Facilitated play is play that is conducted by educators. A set of rules and objectives are in place. To support this facilitated play indoors at Dunbar Memorial Preschool, our program organizes educator led games such as Simon Says, tag, What time is it Mr. Wolf, duck duck goose, and parachute games. For outdoor play, there is a large field/ baseball diamond where our program organizes educator led games such as tag, what time is it Mr. Wolf, duck duck goose, and parachute games.

Fundamental Movement Skills

Fundamental movement skills are gross motor skills that include various body parts such as feet, legs, trunk, head, arms, and hands. These skills are significant because they ground the building blocks for extended and specialized skills needed by children as they continue to grow. Fundamental movement skills include:

- Balance skills - movements where the body persists in place but moves around its horizontal and vertical axes. An example of this is walking on a balance beam that we use in our program.
- Coordination skills - this encompasses gross motor manipulation of objects - catching, throwing or kicking a ball, balloon or scarf tossing
- Loco motor skills - running, jumping, leaping, and hopping

Injury Prevention

Injury prevention is the attentive and mindful effort to prevent injuries before they happen. At Dunbar Memorial Preschool, our educators ensure that we teach children how to be safe, act responsibly in our large open play space, use certain equipment, and be aware of potential hazards.

Physical Literacy

Physical literacy is motivating, developing confidence and physical capability by expanding the knowledge and understanding of the meaning and responsibility for engagement in lifelong physical activities. At Dunbar Memorial Preschool we are committed to promote and engage in physical literacy in our program. We recognize that physically literate children will persistently develop the motivation and ability to understand, communicate, impose, and evaluate different forms of movement.

Screen Time

Dunbar Memorial Preschool has no screen time.