



**Sharing and Playing Since 1962**

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**Parent Handbook**

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## **Welcome**

It is well known that between birth and five years of age, children develop, learn and grow more than they ever will during any other period of their lives. To capitalize on these most precious years, it is our philosophy to provide the preschool children in our care with opportunities to play, sing, dance, paint, colour, read, count, build, create, learn and explore. Hand in hand with this is the main philosophy – share. We feel that through learning to share, children learn respect. Respect for property, peers and elders. Through sharing they are also given respect. We will enrich all areas of their development; social, physical, emotional and intellectual, within a caring, friendly and supportive environment.

## **History of the School**

The Windsor Nursery School has been part of the community for 60 years! We are a non-profit, Parent Co-operative that was established in 1962.

It first came together in a church basement through community minded parent volunteers. The school officially became a registered non-profit society in 1975. With growth of the preschool, and a rising need to expand their facilities, they eventually bought the old Curry's Corner School at 122 Cottage Street from the Town of Windsor. We continue to grow and prosper here today, through the combined efforts of parent members and community support. After serving the community with a part-day preschool program, we are now expanding to offer a full-day program to families. This expansion comes by way of grant funding in relation to the Provincial Expansion for day care spaces.

## **Board/Membership/Parent Committee**

Parents/Guardians automatically become members of the Windsor Nursery School Society upon the enrolment of their child in the school. They are entitled to attend general Board/Parent Meetings and each family holds one vote in decisions to be made. Parents/Guardians are also entitled to hold any position of the Board Executive. Our current Board Executive is listed on our Parent Bulletin Board. A copy of the by-laws is available upon request. The nature of a Parent Co-operative requires that parents are collectively responsible for the business of the school. These responsibilities include:

- Attending scheduled parent meetings
- Serving on at least one parent sub-committee in an active way
- Participating in school program and fundraising activities
- Participating or assisting in transportation during field trips

Please keep informality in mind; we place great value on the freedom to be ones' self for children and caregivers alike. The school has an 'open door' policy and we invite you to visit our program. We thank you for allowing us to be a part of your child's early education and look forward to a rewarding experience.

*"Regulation 47(1) A licensee must establish a parent committee to provide a forum in which parents provide input and staff notice of any matters of interest or concern to the parents. Regulation 47(2) If the licensee is a non-profit organization with a Board of Directors, the parent committee may be a sub-committee of the Board. Regulation 47(3) A parent committee must be open and accessible to parents of all enrolled children."*

## Days and Hours of Operation

We are thrilled to announce that the Windsor Nursery School will have a full-day program. This is part of the Provincial Expansion for childcare spaces. Part-day is still available as we transition to full-day and we will eventually give priority to full-day spaces.

As of September 2022, the hours are **Monday – Friday from 7:30am to 5:30pm**.  
(Should there be a need to adjust the times for families, it will definitely be considered)

**Our license is limited to 20 students with 3 staff for ratio.** The age range for our license is 2.5 year to 6 years (not in school). Your child can join our program on the day they reach 2.5 years of age or after.

## Admission and Withdraw

Our license is for children aged 2.5 years to 6 years (not in school). Your child can begin school on the day they turn 2.5 or after, as well, we will need to have a completed file for them. A complete file will have;

- \*Registration Forms/Parent Contract – with all required signatures
- \*A copy of Immunizations
- \*Payment of Registration Fee - \$50.00
- \*Payment of Parent Co-op Fee - \$50.00
- \*Indication of Tuition payment - EMT, cheques or cash

There can be a wait at time to receive the immunization from your doctor so it is good to plan ahead to ask for it. Your child will have to remain home until we have received it.

If for some reason you decide to withdraw your child, we ask you to give one month written notice. Failure to give written notice will result in having to pay for the next month, even if withdrawn. If a child does not adjust to the program and a parent/guardian is asked to withdraw their child, they will be reimbursed on a pro-rated basis, the amount from the child's withdraw date.

Our waiting list is not always on a first come, first serve basis. Full-time spaces take priority over part-time spaces. Families with children already enrolled have priority over new families.

## Absenteeism and Illness

If your child will not be attending for the day, **please call the school** and leave a message or let one of the staff know. As well, please give the reason (i.e., holidays, cold, fever, ear infection, etc.) as *this is a requirement for licensing*. Please ensure that any current Public Health Measures/Directives are followed. We will keep families informed of any new information as it is given to us. Families are required to pay for sick days.

As a rule, unwell children should not be sent to school. If your child becomes ill while at school, a call will be made for you to arrange pick up of your child.

## **Drop Off and Pick Up times**

CHILD DROP-OFF Arrival should be punctual (between opening and 9:00am) for maximum play opportunities for your child. At WNS we consider timely arrival a valuable opportunity for your child to transition from your care to ours as it provides them with the time to make choices, socialize with others and settle into their day before getting ready for morning activities or outings. As a licensed facility, we also must ensure that child/staff ratios are met at all times.

CHILD PICK-UP If anyone other than a parent or guardian will be picking up your child, please inform the centre and ensure the person is on the pick-up list. We will not release your child to anyone else without proper authorization (verbal or written to director). Educators and the director should know the custodial arrangements as it pertains to your family. Photo I.D. may be required when parents send an unauthorized person to pick up their child. (i.e. in an emergency or unknown to staff).

The Centre closes sharply at 5:30 p.m. daily; all children are to be picked up on or before this time. Unless extenuating circumstances prevail, a late charge will be applied. A \$10.00 charge per 5-minute intervals will be applied. (E.g., At 5:31 pm \$10.00 is due, at 5:36 pm another \$10.00 fee is applied) Parents can expect to be advised of this by the staff present on the day in question; as well, the charge will be applied to your current monthly fee invoice (date, time and late charge amount will be documented.) Fees are due upon written notice and payable to the office to be distributed to the staff who remained late with your child (ren).

Discussion

regarding late charges should be made with the Director or Assistant Director.

- After one hour and no response from the parent or the emergency contact person, the WNS will contact Child Protection Services and follow their instruction.

If there are any special custody arrangements with families, parents/guardians are asked to explain custodial arrangements and keep the staff updated on any changes. When special circumstances apply such as denial of access to one parent, written documentation of custody and access schedules issued by the court is required. When parents are in the process of determining custody in courts, we can not deny access to either parent, until we receive court documentation indicating the permanent arrangements.

## **School Closures**

In the event of bad weather and we need to close the school, we will send an email and/or post the closure on Facebook as well as announce it on local radio.

Should it be necessary to close the school for any other reason, we will do our best to inform parents/guardians as quickly as possible. This may include **any/or all** the following; activating a phone chain, having the executive call, sending an email or a message on Facebook.

When in doubt, it is always a good idea to call the school before leaving home.

## **School Holidays**

The Windsor Nursery School will be closed for the following holidays and families do not pay for these days:

New Years Day – Heritage Day – Good Friday – Victoria Day – Canada Day – Labour Day  
Truth and Reconciliation Day – Thanksgiving Day – Remembrance Day – Christmas Day – Boxing Day

We operate normal hours during school in-service days.

## **Fire Drills**

Monthly fire drills are performed in accordance with the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations.

Children will be instructed to always; drop what they are doing, not retrieve toys, jackets, etc. from hooks and/or cubbies and to listen and follow the staffs' instructions. These fire drills may or may not include taking the children outside. If we go outside for a fire drill, we gather at the fence.

In the event of a **real emergency**, our **safe** gathering spot is **Dykeland Lodge Senior Complex** directly across from the school. The phone number is **902-798-8346**. Parents will be notified from there with instructions for pick-up, etc. Should this ever be necessary, be patient, stay calm and information will be shared in a timely manner.

**Please, be certain we always have a working day-time phone number to reach you.**

## **Cubbies and Hooks**

Each child has their own hook and cubby. We recommend that your child have in their cubby;

- a complete change of clothes
- a hat for the playground (appropriate for each season)
- sunscreen
- swim suit & towel
- a sweater
- a water bottle
- their indoor shoes
- appropriate outdoor clothing for each season

Your child is welcome to leave snowpants on their hook during the winter season. Your child's personal items should remain at home. We will allow a rest time favourite toy. This toy is only to be out of their cubby during rest time. Should your child feel upset, we will allow them to go to their toy for a quick snuggle. We ask that you provide; blanket, small sheet x2 and a pillow for rest time.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO LABEL ALL ITEMS THAT BELONG TO YOUR CHILD.**

## **Rest Time**

The Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations requires that children under the age of five have a rest time. The children are not required to sleep but are given the opportunity for some quiet time in their day, (i.e. lie down and look at books, container toys). The rest time is meant as a rejuvenation time to prevent fatigue and prevent illness. If a child falls asleep, we will not prevent them from sleeping. Children who do not fall asleep, are given quiet activities until the end of the rest period.

## **Bulletin Boards**

There are two bulletin boards in the lobby. These bulletin boards contain information that is required to be posted by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. These items are on permanent display.

On the Parent Bulletin Board, you will find:

- a copy of the daily program plan and routine
- a copy of the current snack and lunch menu
- a list of the names of the current members of the Board Executive
- a copy of the most recent minutes of the Board Executive Mtg and/or Board/Parent Committee Meeting
- any other important notices

On our Facility Bulletin Board, you will find:

- a copy of the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations
- a copy of the parent handbook
- the license for the facility
- a copy of the report of the most recent inspection of the facility
- a copy of the licensee's behaviour guidance policy
- notification of funding provided by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
- any information required by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

A third bulletin board is available for community information.

## **Transportation Policy**

It is the policy of the Windsor Nursery School that all children attending **an event during Nursery School time; including field trips or excursions that take place during the regular school day**, are transported to and from the event by the parent/guardian, or another adult that has been authorized by the parent/guardian to transport their child. Authorization must be in the form of writing and received by the school staff prior to the event. In all cases, children must be properly secured in an approved child car seat, the driver must hold a valid driver's license and have proper registration and adequate insurance.

## **Snack/Lunch**

A copy of the Snack Menu and Lunch Menu will be posted on the Parent Bulletin Board. These menus are established in advance. It is required that snacks be nutritious and provide servings from at least 2 of the food groups identified by Health Canada, including at least 1 serving of vegetables or fruit. Lunch and snack requirements can be found here, simply copy and paste this link.

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/documents/providers/Manuals%20-%20Food%20Nutrition%20-%20Section%20C%20Criteria.pdf>

Also, health regulations require foods that needs to be brought to the school, must be in their original package or “skin” and brought in whole and will be prepared at the school. Snacks from home are not permitted to be eaten at the Nursery School due to Licensing Regulations, however, any snack provided for allergy, dietary or cultural reasons must be clearly labelled with the child’s name.

\*Nursery School Staff will provide a relaxing and enjoyable snack-time environment. They will support children in developing healthy eating patterns and behaviours; and respond to children’s hunger cues.

\*Staff will encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness and children will not be forced to finish food that has been served.

\*Staff will model healthy eating practices when working directly with children at the school.

\*Snacks will recognize food allergies and sensitivities as well as cultural and religious dietary considerations. **Please document any of these needs on your child’s registration health questionnaire or update staff when necessary.**

\*Food and beverages served at special functions during regular operating hours will comply with Health Canada criteria. Any extras or substitutes served will be identified on the menu.

\*Water is always available. Children are encouraged to bring their own water bottle and we can re-fill it if needed.

## **Breastfeeding Policy**

The Windsor Nursery School welcomes all mothers who wish to breastfeed at the school. Mothers are encouraged to do so anywhere in the facility where they feel comfortable and if desired, we will provide a quiet, comfortable location when requested.



## **Windsor Nursery School Program**

Our program follows the Capable, Confident and Curious - Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework. We take cues from the children, incorporating their ideas and things of interest to them. This framework's image of the child sees children as curious, creative, full of potential, capable and confident.

Upon arrival at the preschool, children are given a free time to share, play and explore all areas of the school. (Or outside if weather permits). This important social time allows the children to participate in one or more favourite activity as well as discovering any new learning materials that are available, either side by side their peers or together. Interaction with the staff is also an important part of this welcome time.

Together time, Circle time or Group activity time is a structured period of the day where songs, poems, finger-plays, games and stories, art, science experiments, or baking are introduced. It is also a time where children can share and ask questions of the teacher and classmates. At times, there may be visitors that come to the school to share knowledge and information.

Art time, either as a structured group activity or art time during free play, can be another time where children can explore, experiment and express their individual ideas and creativity. A wide variety of fine motor activities are offered with many mediums and loose parts.

We try to have outdoor play daily, weather permitting and we also have a gym, so children should come to school ready to play in comfortable clothing which allows them to play without fear of getting messy, to move freely and with the appropriate outdoor clothing for the weather. For safety reasons, your child will need to wear a closed shoe indoors and outdoors.

### **Daily Schedule**

7:30 – 9:00	Arrival and Free Play – Indoor &/or Outdoor
9:00 - 9:15	Prep for snack – including washroom routine
9:15 – 9:45	Snack
9:45 - 10:00	Clean up from snack – including washroom routine
10:00 - 11:30	Free Play, Small group activities &/or outside
11:30 - 11:45	Prep for lunch – including washroom routine
11:45 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 12:45	Clean up from Lunch & Prep for rest time – including washroom routine
12:45 – 1:45	Rest / Quiet time – container toys, table toys &/or outside
1:45 – 2:00	Transition from rest – including washroom routine and free play
2:00 – 2:45	Free Play – Indoor &/or Outdoor
2:45 – 3:00	Prep for snack – including washroom routine
3:00 – 3:30	Snack
3:30 – 3:45	Clean up from snack – including washroom routine
3:45 – 5:30	Transition time – Free Play, Outside, Gym, Groups &/or Dismissal

## **Program Options**

Full-Time – Your child attends five full days a week (Monday through Friday). Priority for space is given to full-time families.

Full-Time Part week, the option for a few days a week are available upon request and available spaces.

If you wish to ADD days for your family, you need to provide written notice and we will determine if space is currently available to accommodate the change. If no space is available, you will be added to our wait list.

**Enrolled full-time families will be given priority for an available space** over other families on the waiting list who are not already registered in a program at the school. Provided their account is in good standing.

## **Financial Information**

There is a NON-REFUNDABLE registration fee of \$50.00 AND a Parent Co-op Fee of \$50.00. These fees help off-set minor costs that are not covered by parent fees/government supplemented parent fees.

The Program Fees for **full-time** attendance are \$13.75/day. This amount includes one (1) program fee reductions from the Province of Nova Scotia as part of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in the amount of \$18.25.

Fees are due on or before the first day of each month. We will send out an invoice by the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of the month prior. Program Fees relate to the number of days your child attends each month. Credit is not given for sick days, vacation days, or days the centre may be closed due to water main breaks, power outages, partial storm closure days, etc. Parents/families do not pay for all holidays that the Windsor Nursery School is closed.

If you need to pay on a different date, please have this set up in advance.

If something comes up that your fees will not be paid on the first, please communicate this to the Treasurer and/or Director as soon as possible.

**You can pay tuition by post dated cheque, electronic transfer or cash.**

If you wish to pay by **post dated cheque** please make them out for the first of the month for one full year. These will be given to the treasurer for deposit.

If you wish to pay by **electronic money transfer (EMT)** please make sure that it is done on or before the first of the month. The email is [wncs1962@gmail.com](mailto:wncs1962@gmail.com) and there is no password required but PLEASE include a note as to who and what the money is for.

Paying by cash is discouraged, but if you need to pay with **cash**, please give money directly to one of the staff and a receipt will be issued.

If you have any questions or concerns about tuition, please contact the Director and/or Treasurer.

If tuition has not been received in a timely manner a notice will be placed in your child's cubby and a call will be made. If payment is not received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the current month, you will be asked to keep your child at home until payment has been made.

After the second letter needs to go to families it will also include that if you are late a third time the child (ren) will not be able to return to WNS.

In the event of an NSF Cheque, there will be a \$20.00 fee charged by the Windsor Nursery School and tuition will need to be paid in cash or certified cheque for that month.

If for some reason you decide to withdraw your child, we ask you to give one month written notice. Failure to give written notice will result in having to pay for the next month, even if withdrawn. If a child does not adjust to the program and a parent/guardian is asked to withdraw their child, they will be reimbursed on a pro-rated basis, the amount from the child's withdraw date.

### **Early Childhood Educators/Staff/Students/Volunteers**

For our license we require three staff members to meet ratio. We annually apply for a Grant Position and this position can be filled by an ECE or a non-ECE. All staff are qualified with First Aid/CPR training and have Child Abuse Registry Checks and Vulnerable Sector Checks done prior to employment, as well as signing that they understand our Behaviour Management Policy. Any cook position requires a Food Handlers Safety Certificate or higher training.

According to Regulation 37 (2)(b) of the [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#), child care staff working directly with children who *do not* have a Classification in accordance with Section 37, must complete orientation training no later than 6 months after their date of employment.

Any volunteers will be required to have Child Abuse Registry Check and Vulnerable Sector Check done prior to beginning to volunteer at the school. We often entertain students from various programs and they are also required to have these credentials in place before beginning.

## **Parent Handbook and Family Communication Plan**

### *“Parent handbook*

- 44 (1) *A licensee must have a parent handbook to assist parents in making informed decisions regarding the care of their children that contains the information required under its family communications plan and any additional information required by the Minister.*
- (2) *[repealed]*
- (3) *[repealed]*
- (4) *At the time a child is enrolled in a program, the licensee must provide the child’s parent with access to all of the following:*
- (a) *information about the services provided by the licensee and, in the case of a family home child-care program, the care provider;*
- (b) *the parent handbook.*
- (5) *A licensee must obtain written confirmation that a parent has received the parent handbook.*

### *“Family communications plan*

- 32A (1) *Each licensee and care provider must establish a family communications plan that complies with any requirements established by the Minister to facilitate communication and engagement between*
- (a) *for a licensee, the licensee and the parents and families of children enrolled in the child-care programs operated or managed by the licensee”*

## **Family Communications Plan**

### **\*Access to information about their children’s experience in the facility’s program**

This is achieved by verbal communication at drop off and pick up, phone calls, snippets about the day posted to a closed/private social media group and/or pictures posted at the facility

### **\*Opportunity for parents and families to engage in the facility’s program**

This is done by having an open door policy, parents and families are welcome anytime and can communicate anytime with staff, ECE’s, director and the Board Executive

### **\*Information about the facility’s program operations**

This is found in the Parent Handbook and on our in-house bulletin board

### **\*Parents and families are notified of scheduled events, resources, inspections and regulations**

This information is shared frequently through email, newsletters, Parent Handbook, in-house bulletin boards and at parent meetings

### **\*Access to the Parent Handbook**

This is provided in paper copy or by an electronic version upon request or when a child is registered. It is also on our in-house bulletin board

### **\*Information on the facility’s parent committee/board**

This is a committee formed from the parent/family membership. The parent committee is in place for one year. Parents learn about this committee upon registration.

### **\*Daily records for infants and toddlers N/A**

## **Windsor Nursery School – Behaviour Management Policy**

The following shall be practiced:

1. Positive reinforcement is always practiced. We feel praising children for the good things they do will promote a feeling of self-worth and appropriate behaviours, therefore, avoiding inappropriate behaviours which may come about from negative feedback.
2. We always present a good role model. Children love to imitate the adults in their lives, so providing a good role model is very important.
3. We respect individual differences. We like to keep in mind that everyone has rights, worth and dignity. We also recognize the child's need for security, belonging, recognition, affection and new experiences.
4. When inappropriate behaviour does occur, we believe in positively redirecting inappropriate behaviour. For example;
  - ✓ Let the child know what he/she MAY do
  - ✓ Give the child a choice
  - ✓ Direct the child to another activity
  - ✓ Give the child who has had the inappropriate behaviour directed towards him/her the attention
  - ✓ Help the child who has acted inappropriately to take responsibility for his/her actions
  - ✓ A brief 'time out' may sometimes be required. A child shall NEVER be placed alone in a room but may be moved from an activity for a period of quiet 'thinking' time.
5. If inappropriate behaviour continues over a period of time, or if the behaviour is harmful to others, we will speak to the parents. By doing this we feel we will gain a better understanding of the whole situation. We believe keeping the lines of communication open between home and school will help us better provide for children. Tips and tricks used at home specifically for your child are welcome!

**We practice and expect; manners, respect and sharing from families, children and staff.**

The following forms of discipline shall NOT be used:

1. Corporal punishment, including but not limited to the following;
  - ✗ Striking a child directly or with any physical object
  - ✗ Shaking, shoving, spanking, or other form of aggressive physical contact
2. Harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form, including verbal, physical or emotional.
3. Depriving a child of basic needs including food, clothing or shelter.

## **Windsor Nursery School – Inclusion Policy**

### ***ACCESS***

- ✓ Children of all abilities have a right to equal access and enrolment at the Windsor Nursery School and to the opportunity to participate fully in the preschool program.
- ✓ Adaptation to indoor and outdoor play areas will be made *within available resources*, to encourage free movement and choices, and to make learning experiences positive for all children.

### ***PARTICIPATION***

- ✓ Children of all abilities learn from one another. Opportunities and learning shall be experienced through equal participation of all children. A supportive approach will be provided that builds on each child's needs and strengths.
- ✓ Inclusion is a positive experience for all children involved. Developmentally appropriate group experiences will be made available to encourage the socializing of every child with their peers so that no one feels excluded.
- ✓ All children have a right to expect to learn in a caring, nurturing environment where all are valued for their contribution to preschool life.

### ***SUPPORT***

- ✓ We respect family input by encouraging them to be part of the decision-making process for their child; ensuring the needs of their child are being met.
- ✓ Existing supports and community resources will be included in implementing the child's unique needs; working with parents and professionals who have valuable knowledge and expertise to share with us.
- ✓ Professional development will include Inclusion Training.

## **Current Staff**

**Tracey Cole** is the on-site Director and has been employed with the Windsor Nursery School since 2022. She has a Nova Scotia Level 2 Classification under the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations. She holds an Early Childhood Education Diploma from CDI Collage and received her diploma in Alberta. Tracey has been working as and ECE since 2012.

**Laura-Lee MacDonald** is the on-site Assistant Director and she studied early childhood at the NBCC Moncton Campus and has a Nova Scotia Level 2 Classification under the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations. Laura-Lee has been employed with the Windsor Nursery School since 2019. She enjoys exercising at her local CrossFit Gym and volunteering at her church in Kentville. We are happy that Laura-Lee has joined the Windsor Nursery School team.

**Amanda Leary** holds a Nova Scotia Entry Level Certification under the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations and has been working in childcare for over 15 years, in a structured setting and privately for families. Amanda came to the Windsor Nursery School in 2020. She volunteers within her community at benefits and functions and at her son's elementary school. We are happy to have Amanda as part of the Windsor Nursery School team.

**Megan Kehoe** holds a Nova Scotia Level 2 Certification under the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations an has been working at Windsor Nursery School Since 2022. Megan holds a degree in Early Learning from NSCC Yarmouth. We are happy to have Megan as part of the Windsor Nursery School team.

**Sarah Sheehan** holds a Nova Scotia Level 2 Certification under the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations and has been working at Windsor Nursery School Since 2022. Sarah holds a degree in Early Learning from NSCC Shelburne. Sarah comes to us from the pre-primary program where she worked for the last two years. We are happy to have Sarah as part of the Windsor Nursery School team.

**MacKenna Clarke** started at Windsor Nursery School in 2022 part time and is attending Mount St Vincent where she is studying Childhood Psychology. MacKenna is also part of the Nova Scotia Cheer program.