



Lil' Stars Preschool
5520-45 Ave Crescent
Ponoka, AB T4J 1N6

2024-2025

Preschool Parent Handbook

<http://staug.starcatholic.ab.ca>

Welcome to Lil' Stars Preschool – St. Augustine

Lil' Stars Preschool Program

Our program is based on a “Learning Through Play” philosophy, thus providing many exciting challenges and opportunities for your child to explore. Children are free to play individually and with others, explore and create with the toys, games and manipulative materials in the classroom. Individual attention and instruction will also be a part of the daily routine. During class time, children enjoy crafts, drama, songs, stories, creative group play, seasonal themes, science concepts and outdoor playtime. Exposure to a variety of choices and experiences will contribute to the growth and development of a whole child, Socially, Physically, Intellectually, Creatively and Emotionally.

The preschool is organized into learning centers, based upon chosen themes. The children have the choice as to where they wish to play. If a child is able to make their own choices, this will foster independence and decision making. Children are encouraged to explore all of the learning centers that are planned to provide optimal learning experiences. The purpose of the program is to encourage socialization, foster independence, and also prepare your child for the following year in Kindergarten which is more structured.

Fees

The total yearly cost for Preschool is \$1090. A \$ 90 Non Refundable Registration Fee is due to confirm enrollment after your child has been accepted into the program. The remaining \$1000 is paid in installments throughout the school year. St Augustine School uses SchoolCash online to collect school fees and families are able to pay by Visa, Mastercard or e-cheque through SchoolCash. * Please note that the fee information provided reflects the 2023-2024 school year and is subject to change. The information provided is to help parents estimate costs.

Subsidy Information

Subsidy for children enrolled in preschool is \$125 per month. All families who meet the Child Care Subsidy eligibility criteria and earn a gross household income under \$180,000 are eligible. Visit [Alberta Child Care Subsidy](#) to apply, the application process is simple and straightforward. There is a quick and simple estimator tool on the website that will help you determine if you are eligible for this subsidy.

In January 2022 the *Early Learning and Child Care Agreement*, signed by the federal and provincial governments, came into effect. This agreement is to support accessible, affordable and high quality child care and our preschool falls under this umbrella. Through this grant/agreement we anticipate being able to reduce our preschool fee by \$75/month. We will share more updated/detailed information as it becomes available.

Registration

Children must be 4 years old before January 1st of the school year. Children must also be toilet trained.

Program Planning

The following documents can be found on the Lil Stars page of the St. Augustine school website in the section titled Programs.

- Preschool Program Description 2024-2025
- Lil' Stars Program Plan.pdf

The Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulation can be found at this web address.

- http://www.qp.alberta.ca/570.cfm?frm_isbn=9780779822249&search_by=link

Arrival and Departure

Preschool parents will use the specific entrances specified by the instructor when dropping off and picking up their children. Please note that if you are using the south end parking lot that it is restricted to one way traffic only. Vehicles enter from the east side entrance and exit the south side. Once a regular routine has been established by the individual preschool instructor, parents are asked to remain in the boot-room areas so as to not disrupt the classes that are in session during those times.

- Drop off is at 8:30 with the formal part of the preschool session starting at 8:35
- Pick up is at 11:27

Please observe the drop off and pick up times closely so as not to affect other routines and programming assigned to the preschool instructors.

Child Guidance Policy/Practices

Staff will use guided redirection to refocus student behaviors. Strategies which include "Why don't you come and sit with me for a while and help me with this puzzle" statements will be used. Discussions with the child about appropriate behaviors would take place during those refocusing moments. Staff will also use proximity and kind directions when intervening. Focus on giving the students skills to deal with behavioral situations will empower them.

Lil' Stars Preschool recognizes positive behavior in one or more of the following ways:

- Praise and specific feedback reinforcing appropriate behavior.
- One on one interviews with the child
- Positive notes/conversations with parents
- Positive phone calls to parents
- 'Caught being good' awards

Supervision Practices

As part of the daily routine, preschool staff will be in direct supervision of children at all times. Staff members are expected to observe children's play and behavior during indoor and outdoor activities. The preschool instructor will ensure that the appropriate ratio will be maintained at all times. All preschool staff will be oriented to the program's indoor and outdoor physical environments at the beginning of their employment in the program.

During all on site and off site activities, the preschool staff will ensure all children are accounted for by doing attendance list checks. During off site activities, attendance checks will be conducted before departure and upon arrival to the location. When being transported by vehicle, attendance checks will be conducted prior to boarding on the vehicle.

Supervision practices will meet the children's developmental needs by planning age appropriate activities for the children. For example, during outdoor play, students will be limited to the age appropriate playground equipment. In cases where children need social interventions as part of their individual learning plans, supervisors will be assigned specifically to that child to ensure learning/social goals are met.

Medications

Should your child require that staff administer medications to your child, please meet with the preschool instructors so that you can learn about the process. Procedures are in place that require parental signed permissions that the instructors will review with you.

Admin Procedure 315: Student Health Services: <https://www.starcatholic.ab.ca/download/102795>

Children's Records

The following information will be recorded and maintained on site (school office and preschool classroom):

- Child's name, date of birth and home address
- Completed enrolment form
- Parent's name, home address and home number
- Name, address and telephone number of a person to be contacted in case of emergency
- If medication is administered, written consent of the parent and the name of the medication, the time of administration, the amount administered, and the initials of the person who administered the medication
- Specifics of any health care provided to the child, including written consent of the child's parent
- Any other relevant health information provided by the parent (i.e. allergies)
- Immunization – Parents must provide immunization information upon registration. We do not require a copy of your child's immunization records, but we do need to have a clear understanding of who has been immunized and who has not. This is simply to ensure we are aware of children who are more at risk or susceptible for disease, should an outbreak or epidemic occur.
- It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify us should there be any change in a child's personal records.

Illness

To ensure the health of our community, it is our procedure that children must stay home if they exhibit the following symptoms or conditions:

- Illness that prevents a child from participating comfortably in preschool activities
- Illness that result in a greater need for care than we can provide without compromising the health and safety to other children
- Fever
- Diarrhea: the child may only return after 24 hours of a firm stool
- Vomiting

- Severe coughing
- Mouth sores
- Rash: unless a physician has determined it is not contagious
- Purulent conjunctivitis: (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge) until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo until 24 hours after treatment
- Head lice: until 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Pertussis: (whooping cough) until 5 days of appropriate antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus: until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered
- Flu symptoms (such as H1N1 etc.)
- COVID 19

Students who appear to be ill will be assessed by a staff member. Parent/emergency contacts will be contacted via a phone call to discuss symptoms and request that the child be picked up from preschool.

Emergency Procedures

- Regular Fire and Lock-down drills are practiced. Specific instructions and routines related to the room being occupied by the students will be reviewed
- Prior to the drill, children are given an explanation as to what is going to happen and what they need to do
- Staff members are to speak in a calm tone, using age appropriate vocabulary

Sign Out Procedures

A child is only allowed to be picked up by a parent or an authorized person. If a parent is unable to pick up their child, they must inform the school. At that time, the parent will indicate to the school personnel, who will be picking up the child. The person then picking up the child will then have to provide ID to the staff member upon arrival.

School Closures

St. Augustine School's policy is to remain open on all school days. Parents are encouraged to use their own discretion on days when the weather is inclement. As part of our safety routine, we do ask that you contact the school any time your child will be absent. Messages can be left 24 hours a day (403) 704-1155 or email aug.lg.absentreceiver@starcatholic.ab.ca

Parent Involvement

The success of the program is dependent upon parent involvement. Parents are welcome to take part in the program as much as possible and we hope that if you have any special resources you will share them with us. The specifics of Parental involvement routines in the classroom will be communicated by the individual preschool instructor.

Snack

The specifics of the snack routine in the classroom will be communicated to the parents by the individual instructor.