



PRESCHOOL



Parent Handbook

2022-2023

Mr. Shawn Burkinshaw - Elementary Principal
Ms. Karen Ens – Preschool Supervisor

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Dear Preschool Parents,

Welcome to the MEI Preschool!

We are excited that you have chosen to entrust your children to us as a part of our preschool program. It is a great privilege and responsibility to be a part of training and guiding your preschooler and we look forward to partnering with you as families during this exciting time. We recognize that as parents, you are the first and primary educators of your children and we value a strong partnership with our parent community.

Our goal is to provide both a nurturing and engaging environment that will offer your child the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of learning activities over the course of the year. Providing opportunities for growth in your child's social, emotional, and spiritual development will be just as important to us as will be developing their knowledge and skills for academic growth this year and in years to come.

At MEI, we believe that incorporating a Christian worldview into everything we do is central to our mission and we embrace the fact that we can educate your child and create an environment that is honoring and pleasing to God.

I know that our preschool teaching staff will love your child and will do everything they can to make this a very positive year for your child and family!

Thank-you again for the privilege of working with your child this year!

Shawn Burkinshaw

MEI Elementary Principal

Mission Statement

The mission of the Mennonite Educational Institute, in harmony and co-operation with the home and our supporting churches, is to prepare young people to strive for excellence in all things so they can contribute positively to God's Kingdom and society as faithful disciples of Christ.

Curriculum and Program Philosophy

We strive to bring creativity and imagination in the preschool classroom. Our curriculum is deeply rooted in the knowledge that children learn best through hands-on experiences. These experiences are offered through the use of circle times, centre times, art, literacy activities, special events, outside play and exploring and field trips. Christian principles will be integrated into all aspects of the curriculum. We aim to offer an atmosphere through which children will be able to develop a healthy self-esteem, confidence, desire to learn, an appreciation and consideration of others, a responsibility to care for our environment all done with a Christ-centered approach.



Teaching Staff

The MEI Preschool staff are all licensed Early Childhood Educators and/or Assistants and each hold a current First Aid certificate.

Practicum students from local colleges/universities may participate from time to time in the program as part of their professional training.

Fraser Valley Child Development Centre provides one-to-one support for children in the preschool who require additional support.

Class Times/Fees/Financial Policies

3 Year Old Class (2 days)	Tuesday & Thursday	8:40 – 10:40am	\$1750/yr \$175/mo
4 Year Old Class (3 days)	Mon/Wed/Fri am	8:40 – 11:10am	\$1950/yr \$195/mo
4 Year Old Class (3 days)	Mon/Wed/Fri pm	12:15 – 2:45pm	\$1950/yr \$195/mo
4 Year Old Open Air (2 days)	Tuesday & Thursday	12:15am – 2:45 pm	\$2075/yr \$210/mo
*Please note that our Three year old and Open Air rates are based on a lower student-teacher ratio than our four year old class. A full three year old class is staffed with three ECE teachers.			

Collection of registration, activity and tuition fees are processed by the Elementary School Administration Office. Fees will not be adjusted for a child's illness or vacation time since the preschool holds the child's space for him/her. One month's written notice or one month's tuition is required before withdrawing your child from preschool.

Registration Requirements

In order for your child to be registered for preschool, they must be toilet trained, as well as be turning three years old that calendar year.

The following items are required as part of the registration process.

- Registration fee of \$50
- Activity Fee of \$25 for 3 year olds and \$45 for 4 year olds
- A completed Registration Form
- A photocopy of your child's Birth Certificate and Care Card
- MEI Preschool Immunization Record Form
- Emergency Disaster Plan
- A signed Parent Handbook Agreement Form
- A copy of any court-order pertaining to your child(ren)

Withdrawals

One month's written notice or one month's tuition is required before withdrawing your child from preschool.

We reserve the right to withdraw a child from the program if we feel that the preschool is unable to meet his/her individual needs. Each child will be on a 6 week probation to assess the child's compatibility with the preschool program.

Supplies for Preschool

Please send your child to class in shoes that are easy for them to put on. Clothing should be comfortable, washable (art can get messy) and weather appropriate. Your child will require the following:

- A lunch kit and water bottle (all labeled)
- Indoor shoes - preferably running shoes that your child can put on by themselves (ie: velcro closure, no lace up shoes please)
Indoor shoes are optional for three year old class only
- Backpack that is large enough to hold all items easily
- A change of clothes kept in a large zip lock bag with child's name on it. (shirt, pants, underwear and socks). These items will be kept in your child's backpack.

Label Personal Items

Please label **ALL** clothing, shoes or personal items, which are intended for regular school use. This includes lunch kits and water bottles. This prevents a lot of misunderstandings when similar items are purchased by different students.

Guidelines for Student's Personal Items

We discourage students from bringing toys to school, they may easily get lost, get broken or be unsuitably traded. We provide students with enough play toys and equipment that we love to share 😊



Arrival and Pick Up

- Children are to arrive dressed and ready to play. Running shoes are appropriate footwear.
- Children will only be allowed to leave the facility with parents, guardians or persons specified on the registration form or whom has written permission from a parent.
- Please keep the authorized person list, on your child's registration, up to date.
- If your child will be picked up by someone other than yourself, please inform teachers ahead of time. This can be done on the comment sheet provided or simply by telling the teacher.
- Authorized people must be 18 years of age or older and present photo ID.
- Children must remain in the classroom until parents or authorized persons pick them up and sign them out.
- In the event that a parent or authorized person arrives to pick up a child and that person is deemed to be incapable of providing safe care (visually appears intoxicated), then the preschool will assist in making alternate arrangements.
- In the case of a family separation, in order for a child to continue to attend preschool, a custody agreement must be supplied to the preschool to be kept on file.
- If the parent does not arrive to pick up the child, the supervisor will:
 - Contact both parents work numbers, home numbers and all emergency contact people listed
 - Keep trying for two hours at which time The Ministry of Children and Families will be contacted

Late Pick Up

Late fees will apply when your child is not picked up on time. A \$10 late fee will be charged for every 15 minutes that a parent/guardian is late to pick up their child from class. Payment will be required immediately.

Parent Communication

- **Newsletters** – A weekly newsletter will be emailed to you at the end of each week. This newsletter will keep you informed of upcoming events such as field trips, special events, holidays. Reminders and additional information will also be circulated as needed.

- **Social Media**-For ongoing glimpses into life at MEI and other pertinent information consider following these Instagram accounts:

- Meipreschool
- Meielemprincipal
- Meielempac
- Headofschools

- **Sign in/Sign out sheet** – We will sign your child in and out of preschool. Please let us know if there are any changes to pick up or drop off or if your child will be away from preschool.



- **Today at Preschool White Board** – This is located outside the door and will highlight events that are happening at preschool.

- **Telephone Calls** – We cannot always answer phone calls during class time. If it is an emergency, call the elementary school and the office staff will connect us to the caller. For non-emergencies, the office staff will direct you to the preschool voice-mail where you can leave us a message in the event of a student's absence, or information regarding pick-up. Phone calls will be returned as soon as possible.

- **Concerns** – During the course of the year, if questions or concerns arise about activities, classroom procedures or situations that have occurred, please feel free to talk to your child's teacher. If a settlement is not reached between the parent and the teacher, contact the Elementary School Principal.

- **Absents** – When a student is to be absent for the day, parents are requested to phone (604 859-3700) or email (elementary@meischools.com).

Emergency Response Drills

Once a month we will perform a fire drill with each preschool class. Staff will provide instructions and practice safety procedures and portable evacuation in the event of an emergency or crisis. Several times throughout the year we will also practice keeping safe in the event of an earthquake. Near the end of the year we will participate in an evacuation to a safe spot, being the Elementary School Multi-Purpose Room.

Student Emergency Information

We ask that you notify the preschool if you have any changes throughout the year to your address, phone number, medical information, or emergency contact names and numbers so that our school records remain current.

School Closure

The Preschool will be closed on all statutory holidays and will follow the Elementary School schedule in regards to Christmas break, Spring break, Statutory Holidays and Pro-D days. If MEI Schools closes due to inclement weather, MEI Preschool will be closed as well. In this case, an announcement will be made as early as 6:30 AM on these radio stations: PRAISE 106.5 (FM), Star 98.3 (FM), or CKNW 980 (AM). An announcement will also be posted on the main page of the MEI website. <http://www.meischools.com>, Instagram and Facebook.



Important Phone Numbers in the event of Emergencies and Disasters:

In the event of a disaster – tune into the local radio stations CKNW (AM 980) / Star FM (98.3) or PRAISE 106.5 (FM) for the “City Public Information Line” or the “Emergency Call Centre” in order to access the “Emergency Social Services Reception Centre.”

OUT OF PROVINCE EMERGENCY CONTACT: In the event that local telephone lines are not in operation we will contact ACSI Western Canada with any information that will assist MEI Preschool families with enquiries having to do with our evacuation site and the wellbeing of their children.

Phone: (403) 948-2332 **Fax:** (403) 948-2395

Daily Schedule

- Play-based learning centers--The students are able to explore and choose from a variety of work centers. Each day special activities are planned for the students such as science, math, pre-writing activities and art which are done through the use of small group learning. These activities encourage the use of fine-motor skills.
- Welcome Circle -- Meet and greet your friends and teachers. Teachers tell stories and continue on with teaching through games, songs, and the use of visuals. Children are active participants in circle times. One child per class is chosen to do “mystery bag,” a show and tell opportunity every student participates in.
- Snack -- Students are required to bring a healthy snack from home.
- Art – Through art children can explore, imagine and be creative. We offer opportunities for ‘free’ art, where children can make anything with materials provided. From time to time, we offer a structured art opportunity teaching children to follow instructions in order that they create a project.
- Outdoor Play--Child care licensing regulations require all children to have a minimum of 30 minutes outdoor active play time when in our care. The preschool playground has tricycles, a climbing wall, a slide, basketball hoops, balls and much more. The preschool also has access to the many different outdoor spaces on the MEI campus.
- End of Day Circle –Devotions and Bible stories, group prayer time, debrief about the day, learn about what is planned for next class and say good bye to our friends and teachers. One child per class is chosen to do “mystery bag”.

Screen Time

Screen time is not something that is used on a regular basis. Exceptions are made to enforce a curriculum theme or to do active worship to music. In those instances, screen time is limited to only a few minutes.

Field Trips

Our program includes field trips to various interesting and educational places in the community that will enhance our curriculum. Notices will be emailed/sent home as each event approaches. We require that parents accompany their child on the field trip or find someone who can take his/her place. An activity fee will be collected to cover expenses. In an effort to reinforce outdoor activity as well as to assist in expanding on some of our themes, our classes will be crossing Downes Road with their teachers to access MEI’s large field by the gravel parking lot. These outdoor themed days are not required to have parent participation.



Parents as Partners

We value the contribution of students' parents at our school. We would like you as parents to feel actively involved in your child's education, so we welcome your participation in a variety of ways. Periodically, we will put requests out for assistance with cutting out materials for art, special days in the classroom, and most often our field trips require parent participation.

A group of parents meet once a week to pray for the students and staff of our school. They have had a very significant ministry and many have appreciated their encouragement through prayer.

Please watch for more information in the elementary school newsletter regarding time and location.

Mystery Bag

Being the "Mystery bag person" is an exciting event that children look forward to. On this day, your child is invited to bring in a special item to show the class during circle time. Bring this item in a non-see through bag, that preschool provides, as we will make a guessing game with children.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are special times to celebrate. Your child will receive a birthday crown and a surprise from our gift box. We will celebrate summer birthdays in June. PARTY Invitations are to be distributed to all students in the classroom if inviting preschool friends while at school, as it makes it very difficult for those students who do not receive an invitation. Your support is appreciated in this matter. We can provide a list of class names however contact information will be kept confidential. Due to the number of allergies and food sensitivities, we are not permitting outside treats to be brought in for birthdays.

Photos

Individual and class photos are taken in November. Your activity fee will cover the sitting fee but any photos you like to order, will be at your expense.

Throughout the year, photos will be taken and use on our private Instagram account. If you do not wish to have your child photographed, please indicate your preference on the registration form.



Scholastic Book Club

Most months you will receive a Scholastic Book Club order form. These books are offered at a reasonable price to help you build your home libraries. There is no obligation to purchase books. We would be glad to recommend the books that we are familiar with, however, we do not endorse every book in the club as not all books may be suitable to all families.

Health and Illness

We encourage regular attendance at preschool except when your child has symptoms present that may pose a health risk for other students or staff. Please make sure you routinely check to see how your child is feeling and do not send them to school if they are not feeling well.

If your child is not well or displays any of the following symptoms they may not attend preschool and must remain at home. If these symptoms are observed at preschool, we will contact you to arrange for pick up. If you are working and not able to pick up your child please ensure that you are able to make alternative arrangements for someone else to pick up your child from preschool.

Children will be sent home and should remain at home if any of the following symptoms are present (*students must stay home until he/she has been symptom free for 24 hours and can attend school without symptom reducing medication – such as Tylenol*):

- Fever above 37 C
- Persistent cough
- Body aches
- Sore throat
- Runny nose (that is yellow/green)
- Sneezing
- Nausea/upset tummy
- Vomiting
- Rashes or spots of any kind
- Discharge from or redness/itching of eyes (possible pink eye)

In some cases these symptoms may have a simple explanation such as the presence of seasonal allergies. If there are circumstances we should be aware of, please contact the preschool so that we can be assured that your child's symptoms do not pose a risk to other students.

In all cases, preschool teachers reserve the right to make a final determination of whether your child is able to attend preschool. These decisions will be made first and foremost in the interests of protecting the health of other students and staff. Thank-you for understanding if we ask your child to stay at home for what may seem like mild symptoms.

Allergies

If your child has severe allergic reactions it is important that you inform the staff. This includes allergies to foods as we do have class baking and cooking days. If your child requires treatment such as an EpiPen in case of a reaction (such as a bee sting, peanut allergy) be sure that the supervisor is aware of it and that there is a kit on hand at the center at all times. You will also need to sign a permission to submit medication form.

To safeguard children at risk, we have designated our preschool as a “**NUT FREE ZONE**”. We ask for your cooperation in ensuring any food items sent with your child are “nut free”.

Snacks and Nutrition

Please send your child to preschool with a healthy snack that is ready to eat (cut to appropriate size for your child) and a water bottle. Snacks sent to preschool should be something your child can easily open themselves. Please make sure your child's name is clearly labeled on their lunch bag. **Our preschool is a NUT FREE ZONE.**

Medications

No medications will be administered by any school staff member, prescription or over-the-counter. An exception will be given for medication that is needed in a life-threatening situation (ie: puffer, epi-pen). In the event that our staff are required to administer medication during class time, a Medication Administration Consent Form must be completed at the time of enrollment.

Injury

If your child sustains a minor injury while in our care, we will provide First Aid treatment. We will report the incident to you upon arrival and depending upon the treatment required, a minor incident form may require your signature.

In the case of an injury requiring medical or dental attention, the child's parents/guardians will be notified immediately. If we are unable to contact a parent, your alternate contact person and/or family physician will be called.

If it has been deemed that emergency transport is necessary, the preschool will contact emergency services. A staff member will accompany your child to the nearest emergency facility. Any expenses incurred in this situation will be the parent/guardian's responsibility.

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect (As stated by the Community Care Facility Act)

If a staff member has reason to suspect abuse or neglect of a child has occurred outside of our care, this will be reported to the school principal and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. It is our legal responsibility to report suspicions/disclosures to the appropriate parties, not to determine if abuse has occurred. Our primary concern is for the health, safety and well-being of the children in our care.

Challenges and conflicts will happen from time to time at preschool and they are very much a part of learning how to interact with others in a social environment. The following are the guidelines we follow when addressing such situations.



Guidance/Discipline (As stated by the Community Care Facility Act)

Prevention Strategies:

- Establish clear, consistent and simple limits
- Offer straight forward explanations for limits
- State limits in a positive way, rather than in a negative way
- Focus on the behavior, rather than on the child
- State what is expected, rather than pose questions
- Allow time for children to respond to expectations
- Reinforce appropriate behavior, with both words and gestures
- Ignore minor incidents
- Encourage children to use you as a resource
- Scan

Guidance Strategies:

- Gain a child's attention in a respectful way
- Use proximity and touch
- Remind
- Acknowledge feelings before setting limits
- Distract or divert when appropriate
- Model problem-solving skills
- Offer appropriate choices
- Use natural and logical consequences
- Redirect
- Limit the use of equipment
- Time away
- Holding Techniques
- Provide opportunities for children to make amends

Unacceptable practices: (Section 27 of the Community Care Facility Act, Child Care (BC Reg 319/89))

- Shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking or any other form of corporal punishment.
- Harsh, belittling or degrading treatment, whether verbal, emotional or physical, that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self-respect.
- As a form of punishment, confined, physically restrained or kept, without adult supervision, apart from other children.
- As a form of punishment, deprived of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of a toilet.

MEI Elementary Traffic and Parking Lot

Here is a list of the details describing our traffic program. They have evolved over time and will no doubt continue to change as we make improvements. With three schools on campus and the large number of students who arrive in a very short period of time in the morning (and an only slightly longer period in the afternoon), it is critically important that everyone is aware of and follows these regulations:

1. The most important tips:

- Drive slowly, pay attention, and have patience
- Do not talk on cell phones while you drive through our parking lot
- Attend to our traffic supervisors
- Work around the peak times, come a little early or pick up around 2:45p.m.
- We would like to keep traffic flowing so please don't park on the bridge or in the narrow areas between the Elementary and Middle School

2. Driving through the driveway in the morning (8:15 – 8:30 a.m.):

- The driveway is divided into 2 lanes –
 - The right lane of the driveway is used for **QUICK** drop-off only. Please try to have your child ready to exit your vehicle on the **PASSENGER** side. If more time is needed please park in the gravel parking lot across Downes Road.
 - The left lane of the driveway is used for driving through only.
- After dropping off your student, move to the right lane if you are proceeding to the Middle or Secondary School and the left lane if you are exiting on Downes Road (right turn only!)

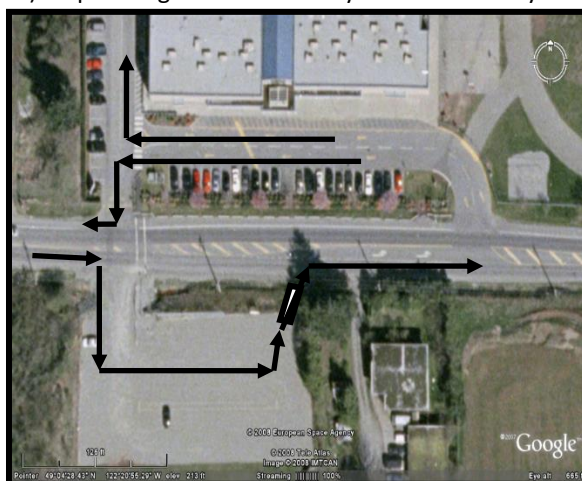
3. Driving through the driveway after school (2:15 p.m. and later):

- The driveway is divided into 4 lanes (even though there are only 3 lanes marked with lines)
 - The Fire Lane next to the school is for parking; it is the only lane in which parents may park and walk away from their vehicles
 - The left and right lanes are waiting lanes – parents may wait in their vehicles for their children. Please move ahead as other cars leave so that cars in line out to Downes Road can move into the driveway.
 - The centre lane is used for driving through only.
- Please attend to the parking supervisors; they help children cross the middle lane and help cars make room for each other.

4. Using the Gravel Parking Lot (South of Downes Road) - The crossing guard is on duty from 8:15 to 8:30 a.m. and 2:30 to 3:00 p.m. While the crossing guard is on duty:

- Cars exiting the driveway may turn **right only**.
- We encourage cars to enter coming from **the west on Downes Road**.
- Exit the parking lot from the driveway **at the east end of the parking lot only**. Turn right onto Downes Rd. To go the other way on Downes Rd. (i.e., West) loop through the Elementary School driveway.

Please Note:
RIGHT TURN ONLY
 onto Downes Road
 while Crossing Guard
 is on duty: 8:00-8:30 a.m.
 and 2:30 – 3:00 p.m.





Elementary School Calendar of Events 2022-2023

2022

September	5	Monday	Labour Day
	7	Wednesday	First Day of Preschool
	29	Thursday	Pro. D. Day – No School
	30	Friday	Truth and Reconciliation Day – No School
October	10	Monday	Thanksgiving Day - No school
	21	Friday	Pro. D. Day – No School
	28	Friday	No School
November	10	Thursday	Non-instructional day – No School
	11	Friday	Remembrance Day holiday - No school
December	16	Friday	Last Day of Classes

2023

January	3	Tuesday	School Reopens, first day back from Christmas Holidays
	27	Friday	Non-Instructional Day
February	17	Friday	Pro. D. Day – No School
	20	Monday	Family Day – No School
March	10	Friday	Last Day of Classes before Spring Break
	27	Monday	School Re-opens after Holidays
April	7	Friday	Good Friday – No School
	10	Monday	Easter Monday – No School
	28	Friday	Pro. D. Day – No School
May	22	Monday	Victoria Day - No School
	23	Tuesday	Pro. D. Day – No School
June	20	Tuesday	Last Day of Preschool

Parent Handbook Agreement Form

****Please sign and return this form to MEI Preschool on the first day of school.***

Child's Name _____

I, _____, have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the MEI Preschool Parent Handbook.

By signing this document, I hereby agree to abide by the contents of this handbook.

_____ Date signed: _____

(Signature of Parent/Guardian)