

**TOTEM NURSERY**  
**PRESCHOOL SOCIETY**  
**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**2022 – 2023**



**Physical & Mailing Address**

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Your child's Name(s)

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# Welcome to Totem Nursery Preschool Society

## **Mission**

Learning through play to help each child achieve and enjoy their fullest development possible.

## **Vision**

We at Totem Nursery Preschool strive to provide your child with the foundation for a positive transition into elementary school. We do this without putting an emphasis on formal education, but rather by sparking a love of learning through a variety of play opportunities that foster the development of a child's social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and creative self.

Our program emphasizes the development of a positive sense of self worth and self esteem in young children. A child who has confidence in themselves is more likely to experience successful interactions with others and have a positive attitude toward learning.

## **Board Details**

Totem Nursery Preschool Society is **Board and member operated**, this means we are akin to your golf clubs, hockey, soccer, and all other non-profit organizations. Though we charge a fee we rely heavily on **parent involvement, fundraising and donations** to keep our tuition fees low while maintaining a high standard learning environment for Totem Nursery Preschool Students.

We need to have the supporting board positions and other volunteer positions (see below) filled, and have general parent involvement, so that we can keep our tuition fees low and maintain a high standard learning environment for Totem Nursery Preschool Students. Volunteer bonds were founded to encourage participation in the operation of the Preschool (see page 8 for more on volunteer bonds.)

You may contact our administrator to receive a list of board position and roles and responsibilities for each role on the executive.

There are many other volunteer opportunities for parents to engage in throughout the year. These volunteer opportunities will be posted in our monthly newsletters or posted on a volunteer request at the front doors, as needed. There are always plenty of volunteer opportunities, during and after business hours, to take part in.



# General Information

## Current Fees for 2021 / 2022 Preschool Year

Registration fee for all classes non-refundable	\$40.00
Two days a week (Tuesday/Thursday) monthly charge	\$145.00
Three days a week (Monday/Wednesday/Friday) monthly charge	\$195.00
Volunteer Bond	\$100.00



## School Hours of Operation

**Monday – Friday 8:00am – 4:00pm**

**Teacher’s Lunches are at: 11:35 am – 12:35 pm**

**Administrative Assistant regular hours are Monday to Friday: 8:45 am – 3:00 pm**

**Administrative Assistant Lunch is at: 11:45 am – 12:45 pm**

## School Closures

The Preschool will be closed:

1. All public holidays, but will **not** be closed on SD60 professional development days. Totem Preschool may choose to be closed for up to 4 staff planning days. These days will be determined and added to our calendar.
2. When the staff is ill, unless a qualified substitute has been obtained.
3. As stipulated in staff contracts (i.e. professional days, workshops) unless a qualified substitute has been obtained.
4. At the discretion of the Board of Directors or Staff Members in an emergency.
5. In the event of extreme weather conditions as determined by the Board and the Staff.
6. If the Preschool building or condition of the environment is found to be unsafe or unhealthy for the children as determined by the Preschool Board, Staff, School District #60 and/or the Public Health Officer.

**\*\*Class representatives will contact parents in the event of an unscheduled closure\*\***

## Daily Program Schedule

<u>Minutes</u>	<u>Morning &amp; Afternoon Times</u>	<u>Activity</u>
25	9:00 – 9:25 & 1:00–1:25	Check in and Free Play
10	9:25 – 9:35 & 1:25–1:35	Clean-up and Sign Language
30	9:35 –10:05 & 1:35–2:05	Art & Discovery
5	10:05–10:10 & 2:05–2:10	Clean-up
20	10:10 –10:30 & 2:10–2:30	Circle Time
20	10:30 –10:50 & 2:30–2:50	Hand Washing & Snack
5	10:50 –10:55 & 2:50-2:55	Library
35	10:55– 11:30 & 2:55–3:30	Active Play

**\*\*Drop off time is no earlier than 8:50am or 12:50pm & Pick-up time is no later than 11:30 am or 3:30 PM\*\***

## **General Information Continued...**

### **What Your child Will Need:**

1. Indoors shoes that have been **labelled**, with first and last name, to be left in child's cubby.
2. **Small backpack, labelled**
3. A complete set of clothes placed in a Ziplock, **labelled** and at the bottom of backpack.
4. Appropriate outdoor clothing for the season, **labelled**.
5. **Healthy Choice Snacks:** part of the approved curriculum that is encouraged to be taught in Preschools across BC is Health and Nutrition. As such parents are highly encouraged to send their children with healthy option snacks, **no more than two items** with at least one of which being a fruit/vegetable or something with no added sugars.
6. a **labelled** water bottle. *Water is a preferred choice of beverage during preschool.*
7. **We are a NUT FREE preschool.**

**NOTE: Backpacks cannot remain at the preschool while the child is not present due to licensing. We ask that you choose SMALL backpacks because space is limited where children hang their belongings.**



### **Your Childs Cubby**

Your child will be assigned a cubby that will clearly have their name labelled on it. Your child will keep their indoor shoes in their assigned cubby, we encourage parents to work with their children to be able to put on and take off their own shoes as this helps build independence for school.

### **Your Childs Mailbox**

At the Entrance there will be a mailbox slot for each child. Their mail is located **under** their name. We will be adding correspondence in this slot, art work, etc. that can be picked up when you drop off or pick-up child. Please continue to check your child's mailbox regularly.

### **Snack Time**

Teachers will assist the children in washing their hands and retrieving their lunch packs from their backpacks. Food should be packed in a manner that is easy for the children to open and help themselves during snack time. We model independence to help ready them for kindergarten and assist only when necessary. Our Preschool encourages families to take part in litter less lunch to promote environmental awareness.

Please note that this is a **\*Snack Time** and not a lunch time for children so they will not need a full lunch.

## Arrival and Pick-Up

### Arrival

- All parents/guardians or authorized adults **MUST** sign in their child. Please sign children in and out using the name of the person who dropped off and will be picking up the student.
- Children are to be dressed in comfortable play clothes that are appropriate for fun projects and weather. Outdoor weather appropriate clothing must always come with your child in case of an emergency that would require us to leave the building.
- Children are to be brought in to the Preschool building and delivered to the teachers ready for preschool class. Drop off parents or guardians are responsible for preparing their child for indoor play (i.e. hang up jacket, washing hands, hanging backpacks, saying goodbye.) Please place outdoor jackets on bottom hook and backpack on top hook.

### Pick-Up

- Children are to be collected promptly at the end of class between 11:15-11:30 / 3:15-3:30, if you feel you need extra time to gather belongings and sign out you may want to come a few minutes earlier.
- Parents/guardians or authorized adults **MUST** sign their child out after every class.
- **Only parents/guardians or authorized adults will be permitted to pick-up children.** Picture ID must be shown to staff if staff is unfamiliar with the person arriving to pick up your child.
- In case of an emergency and you require someone other than those authorized to pick-up your child, you must phone the preschool and speak to a staff member or leave a message on the answering machine telling them who is picking up your child.
- ***No child will be released when it appears to staff that the authorized adult is impaired (i.e. intoxicated.) The staff will offer to call a relative, friend or a cab to pick-up the adult and the child. If the authorized adult insists on driving, he/she will be informed that the police will be called immediately.***

### Late Pick-Up

It is important to pick up your child promptly at the end of class. If, due to an emergency, you will be late picking up your child please contact the preschool. If you have not arrived to pick up your child **by the end of class being either 11:30 or 3:30** you will be considered late. There is a late pick-up fee of 20.00 that will be applied after 5 minutes. If late pick up is deemed a chronic problem, we will be addressed from our policy and procedure manual.

### Absenteeism

If your child will be absent for any reason, please notify the preschool; if no one answers please leave a message. It is very important to keep us informed of when your child is going to be away whether it is because of holidays or due to sickness.

## Fees

A non-refundable registration fee of \$40.00 and a \$100.00 volunteer bond must accompany completed registration forms, along with tuition as outlined below, to complete enrollment.

### Monthly Tuition Fees:

- Payment options are cash, email money transfers, postdated cheques or credit card through the registration system Sandbox. Processing fees through sandbox will have a surcharge per transaction. There is an option to set up for automatic payments through sandbox.
- If paying by post-dated cheques please date them for the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month and make them payable to **Totem Preschool**. Post-dated cheques for the entire year are due to complete registration and guarantee your child's enrollment. **Please put your child's full name on all checks.**
- If paying by cash or EMT your payment must be handed into the Administrative Assistant at the preschool by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the prior month (i.e., October fees are due Sept 15<sup>th</sup>.) To complete registration we must receive first month fees when you enroll your child.
- If paying with credit card, tuition is processed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. **There is a credit card processing fee** of \$4.50 on 2 days a week tuition and \$5.95 on 3 days a week tuition. This fee is an additional cost with the monthly tuition.
- There are no refunds for holidays, absenteeism, illness.
- If enrollment occurs between the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, a full month of tuition will be due. If enrollment occurs between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the end of the month, half of the month's tuition will be due.

### Refund Policy:

In the event of any unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances that occur and the teachers are unable to teach, the class will be canceled. There are no refunds or credits if a class is canceled unless there are 3 or more missed days in a row. You will receive a refund if in those canceled days your child had missed 2 consecutive scheduled classes at Totem preschool. The preschool will prorate the days missed at the end of the month. This does not include planned school closures and Pro-D days.

### Affordable Childcare Benefit

There is an Affordable Childcare Benefit that families may want to apply for and get assistance with monthly fees.

Families will be responsible to pay the full amount for tuition while awaiting approval from the Ministry. Please remember that ACCB only pays for the days that your child is attending the preschool. ACCB does not cover the times when the preschool is closed so **parents** will be responsible for making up the **difference in fees** for these times (i.e. Christmas Break, Spring Break.) For further clarification of dates that you will be required to pay for please see our Administrative Assistant. By being aware of these dates you will be able to be better prepared for any payment arrangements in advance.

**If you need information on application process feel free to ask our administrative assistant.**

## **Fees continued...**

### **Volunteer Bond**

Volunteer bonds were founded to encourage participation and assist in the operation of the preschool.

Volunteer bonds of \$100.00 post dated for May 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year are required with registration. Checks will be returned to all members who complete a minimum of 2hrs of volunteer time during the school year. Our administrator will record volunteer time. Volunteering opportunities will be posted in our newsletter month to month. There will be plenty of opportunities to fulfill volunteer hours both during and after business hours.

In the event of withdrawal from Totem Preschool within the first 30 days after registration the volunteer bond may be returned in full. After the 30-day grace period, the volunteer bond will only be returned in the event the two volunteer hours have been completed.

Volunteers are required to have a criminal record check on file to volunteer in the preschool or stay past the 15 minutes drop off time. Please be aware that you can apply online by using this link <https://justice.gov.bc.ca/eCRC/home.htm> using the Access Code **6AFHJH7MKK**.

### **Late Fee Penalty**

Your payment is considered late the day after payment is due. At this time a \$20.00 late fee will apply along with your late payment. This applies whether you are paying by either cash or check. A written notice informing you of late payment will be issued, upon receipt of this letter full payment, including payment of late fee needs to be made within 5 business days. If payment is not made within this time frame your child will be unable to attend regularly scheduled classes until payment is made.

### **NSF Fees – for check paying parents**

The first NSF fee will be \$25.00. If a second NSF fee situation occurs the NSF fee will be \$45.00 and the parents/guardians will be required to pay all future tuition by cash, certified check or by money order.

### **Failure to Pay Fees**

Unresolved Payments of any kind may lead to termination of enrollment. Please see section 2.4 of our Policy and Procedure handbook for details.



## **Guidance in the Classroom**

We will refer to the booklet "Guiding Child's Behavior" that states guidelines in the Community Care and Assisted Living Act/ Child Care Licensing.

### **The children will:**

- Respect the rights of others
- Respect the environment
- Use "walking feet"
- Use "inside voice"
- Sit at a table when eating and drinking
- Participate in teacher led activities

### **Guidance strategies will include:**

- model appropriate behavior
- Give verbal direction or redirection
- set clear age-appropriate limits
- Remind children of the rules
- Encourage children to make choices and develop their own problem-solving solutions
- Redirect the child's activity or frustration, as needed
- Be consistent

### **Specific Guidance Strategies will include:**

1. One verbal redirection
2. Proximity: staff will move close to the child
3. Redirect: Change of spot for the child
4. Removal of child, taking by hand if necessary, to a "time-in" scenario

**\*Any potential of physical harm to others will result in the instant removal of the child from the situation.\***

### **Procedure for Continuous Unacceptable Behavior**

1. If inappropriate behavior persists, the staff will discuss the problem with the parents/guardians and together will attempt to solve the problem
2. If the behavior continues an outside professional can be obtained if desired by the parents/guardians.
3. Student 3 strike disciplinary policy will be implemented.
4. Appointments with the teachers may be made after school between 3:30 - 4:30 pm. Any concerns from the staff will be addressed to parents in a sensitive and tactful way, making sure that information remains private.
5. If progress cannot be made the child may be asked to leave our program.

*If parents are looking for information regarding a child's progress please let the manager know and also feel free to reach out to the teachers.*

## **Health of a Child**

### **Illness Policy**

1. Parents/guardians will be required to provide a copy of their child's care card and their immunization records.
2. Please keep your child home if you believe them to be ill. No child will be permitted to attend with a bad cold, fever, vomiting, diarrhea, pain, headaches, influenza like symptoms, a contagious infection, skin infection, or symptoms of any communicable disease. The staff has the authority to determine a child's wellness.
3. Parents/guardians are required to notify the Administration Assistant if your child contracts a contagious disease (i.e., chicken pox, measles, hand foot & mouth or pink eye.) If you have a doctor confirmed contagious disease, the Health Unit on Call Nurse must be contacted for further information so that the preschool can be informed of the proper procedures.
4. The child's parents/guardians will assume any financial responsibility in the case of an emergency, and a doctor, ambulance or other health care provider must be called in.
5. There will be no financial compensation should any of the above-mentioned concerns occur.
6. If a child is recognized as ill or becomes ill during class. The staff will notify the parents and ask that you pick them up in a timely manner. If we are unable to reach you, we will call the person on your emergency contact list to pick up your child.

### **Medication**

1. Staff may administer medication to a child only if a Medication Consent Form has been completed by the parent/guardian.
2. Medication will only be given in the amounts and times specified on the Medication Consent Form. Staff may administer only medication prescribed by the child's physician or non-prescription medication authorized by a physician or pharmacist. Prescribed medication will only be given if the medication is in the original container with the child name and dosage instructions on it.
3. If the child is permitted to self-administer, a staff member will supervise the administration.
4. Accurate records of medication administration will be kept on file at the preschool.
5. All medication will be stored according to the Community Care and Assisted Living Act of the Child Care Licensing Regulations and accessible only to the staff/parents of the preschool.

### **Medical Emergency**

Parents will be made aware as soon as possible when their child is involved in an accident. Staff will tend to the child and then fill out a reportable incident form.

### **Changes at Home**

If your child may be experiencing any changes that may affect your child, please advise staff so we can be prepared to offer any needed support.

## **Classroom Routines and Special Occasions**

### **Birthdays**

A special snack may be brought in on your child's birthday. Please take steps to ensure that you are aware of and adhere to restrictions due to allergies within the preschool. No balloons, clowns, treat bags, or candles please. Allowing teachers to know ahead of time when bringing birthday snacks is helpful and appreciated.

If your child's birthday is not during school time, the parent or guardian may pick a specific day for a celebration.

If you are bringing invitations, please place them in class mailboxes or hand them directly to parents. Do not give invitations to your child to hand out at the Preschool. By taking this simple step you can help to eliminate hurt feelings.

### **Class Parties**

We have several classroom parties throughout the Preschool year on special occasions like Halloween, Christmas, Valentine's Day, etc. There will be a party snack sheet usually posted at the entrance of the school should parents wish to bring a party snack.

### **Bathroom**

- All children must be **fully toilet trained**.
- **Fully toilet trained means** that the child knows when he or she has to use the bathroom and does not need any assistance in the bathroom including wiping self, **pull-ups are not acceptable**.
- Staff will assist with zippers, buttons etc. encouraging independence of the child.
- Staff will assist with changing of clothes if an accident should occur. Please provide a complete change of clothes.

### **Outside Play**

Please remember to dress your children appropriately for outside play. The class will be outside if it is -15 or warmer; this includes the wind chill. We may also stay inside to play if the play yard is too icy, wet or it is too windy out.

### **Special Theme Days**

Throughout the year we will have classroom theme days such as pajama day, crazy hair day, cray hat day, and certain days when we ask the children to wear fun colors specific to what is going on that week. ex: wear green during St. Patty's day.

We also encourage families to take part in Orange shirt day which is on September 30<sup>th</sup> and Pink shirt day which is on the last Wednesday in February.

## **Classroom Routines continued...**

### **Themes**

There are different themes throughout the school year, activities, books, discussions, and art that will coordinate with these themes. The themes will be marked on the calendar in the Preschool and outlined in the monthly newsletter.

### **Active Play**

Totem Preschool is required to offer at least 30 minutes of active play for each 2-3 hours the children are in preschool. Active play is considered moderate to vigorous burst of high energy such as running or jumping. This will be outside or in the basement play area.

### **Screen Time**

We do not offer screen time of any kind to the children. Teachers reserve the right to use media during lesson time to help as a learning tool.

### **Preschool Visitors**

We plan on having community visitors come through out the year and spend time sharing what their role is in our community. We also enjoy our local librarian to come in when possible to share books and story time fun with our classes. We will let families know when these visitors are scheduled to come to our program

### **Care and Supervision**

Children must be supervised at all times and a second qualified adult must be immediately available to supervise in the event the person responsible for supervising children must leave because of urgent or unforeseen circumstances.

### **Video Surveillance**

Totem has consistent surveillance cameras running throughout the school at all times. We have these cameras in place for the safety of the children, parents/guardians and staff that are in the preschool. Release of these video's will only be done if approved by the board for safety and security reasons only.

### **Class Dojo**

Totem is using the Class Dojo app to share daily photos/videos with parents and is a great way for parents to communicate directly with the teachers.

# Totem Preschool Evacuation Plan & Disaster

## Preparedness

In the event that the preschool has to be evacuated we would go to Robert Ogilvie Elementary School. Upon arrival, we would speak to the administrator of Robert Ogilvie notifying them of our situation. Then, immediately begin phoning parents and emergency contacts of children.

In the event of a community evacuation, we would go to Robert Ogilvie Elementary School then wait for instructions from their Administration, and walk or take a bus to North Peace Secondary School. Upon arrival at North Peace Secondary School, we would then begin to notify parents and emergency contacts of our situation.

In the event of an emergency and/or disaster we will follow our evacuation plan according to our policies and procedures. If we are evacuated from our last location at North Peace Secondary School, we will follow the direction of the Peace River Regional District along with the school districts emergency response team. We will have a class call list at all times to be in contact with parents and/or guardians.

In the event that we have a situation where lock-down is needed we would ensure the preschool entrance, doors and windows are all locked and secure with blinds closed. Depending on the severity of a lock down situation, it will be up to the discretion of the staff to determine if entering the storage room is necessary, closing the self-locking door and calling for help from there. In either case staff and children would wait for assistance, and an all clear while keeping your children calm and safe. We would then phone parents when it is safe to do so, however, parents must then wait for us to phone with an all clear before coming to pick up their child.

## Notice of Withdrawal

I understand that the Notice of Withdrawal form must be filled out and given to the Administrative Assistant **one calendar month in advance** of the date of withdrawal. One month's fee will be payable in lieu of such notice. However, where the withdrawal is necessitated by unforeseen circumstances, the parents/guardians may bring his/her case to the Executive Board, who then may consider waiving the one-month penalty fee.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am giving notice that \_\_\_\_\_,  
Parents/Guardian Child's Name

will no longer be attending Totem Nursery Preschool Society as of  
\_\_\_\_\_.  
Last Day of School

My child is in the \_\_\_\_\_ class.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parents/Guardians

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Administrative Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Confidentiality, Conflict Resolution and Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians**

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality at Totem Nursery Preschool Society refers to all the verbal and written information about potential, enrolled and former children, families and employees. Confidentiality will also be upheld in relation to the Board meetings, discussions and decisions. All staff and executive members will be expected to fulfill their obligation to repeat protection of privacy. Please see Section 16.0 in our Policy and Procedure manual for details on confidentiality.

### **Conflict Resolution between Adults**

Staff, board members and parents at Totem Nursery Preschool Society will make continuous efforts to practice effective communication with each other. When there are differences of opinion and disputes, staff will initiate opportunities to problem solve the differences in a timely manner. All staff will utilize skills that demonstrate constructive discussion and respectful communication. Everyone involved will endeavor to agree on a meaningful solution of each dispute. If individuals have unsuccessfully tried to negotiate resolution of conflict, they may ask another staff person to facilitate a further dialogue. All efforts will be made to mutually agree on identifying a facilitator and time lines for a meeting. The goal will be to work towards mutually agreed upon solutions.

*Should there ever come at time in which you would like to review our Policy and Procedure Manual you can receive a copy from our administrator.*

*Thank you for enrolling with Totem Nursery  
Preschool Society  
Year 2022-2023*

*We look forward to another great year!*

# Totem Preschool Staff



**Trish Belcher**  
**Licensed Early Childhood**  
**Educator Assistant**



**Gayane Ambaryan**  
**Licensed Early Childhood**  
**Educator**  
[gayane.ambaryan@totempreschool.com](mailto:gayane.ambaryan@totempreschool.com)



**Courtney Lockhart**  
**Manager/Administrator**  
**Licensed Early Childhood Educator Assistant**  
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