

AGAPE LEARNING CENTRE

Early Childhood Services



We would like to welcome you and your child to our kindergarten and ECS (preschool) programs at Agape Learning Centre. We are looking forward to an exciting year of new experiences and lots of fun!

It is during the first years of life that children form attitudes about themselves, others, learning, and the environment, so we work very hard to find ways to help children develop positive attitudes.

Educating a child is most successful when families and schools work together in the best interest of the child; after all, you are your child's first teacher! Parents are the most important teachers and play a central role in the lives of their children. When children begin ECS, parents and teachers form a partnership to support learning at home and at school. In school the values and beliefs of the home are acknowledged, and the cultural diversities of families are recognized. We appreciate your input and assistance in our program so please feel comfortable to come and join us in the classroom. The goal of our program is to meet your child's needs not only intellectually, but also physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally.



Going to school is one of the most important experiences in a child's life. School can be an exciting place where children meet new and different people and participate in many new and different experiences. We promise to work diligently to provide the children with wonderful experiences that help them to feel good about themselves and their school.

The ECS program is funded by the Department of Alberta Education. To attend, a child must be 4 years of age by December 31 of that school year and have mild or moderate need in the area of speech, language development, socialization, fine or gross motor, etc. An assessment is required from a physician, therapist, etc if your child has been assessed by the Children's Allied Health Services and has been diagnosed with a mild/moderate need delay; a full copy needs to be brought in. Also, an Ages & Stages Questionnaire, filled out by you, the parent, may show an area of need that would qualify your child for the program. (You may obtain these forms from our office).

The kindergarten program is funded by Alberta Education. To attend, a child must be 5 years of age by December 31st of that year. Two different kindergarten classes will be offered (depending on the enrollment numbers). The first class is on Mondays and Wednesdays and the second is Tuesdays and Thursdays, both from 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m. The classroom doors will open at 8:55 a.m. and pick up will be at 3:30 p.m.

Transportation

There is a transportation grant provided by Alberta Education of approximately \$54/month for parents who transport their children to and from school. This grant is paid out once a year approximately March. Please note, that if you are receiving transportation funds already from another organization, you will not be eligible for this grant. Bus transportation may also be provided by Agape Learning Centre if space is available. If you require transportation, please let the Agape office know as soon as possible.



Holidays

We are closed to observe certain holidays. The centre closes for the following statutory holidays:

Christmas	Victoria Day
Boxing Day	Canada Day
New Year's Day	Civic Holiday
Family Day	Labour Day
Good Friday	Remembrance Day
Easter Monday	Thanksgiving Day

Agape may be closed on additional days but parents will be informed in advance.

Communication

Main Office Phone Number: 403-320-2772

Preschool/ECS office number: 587-486-8066

Email addresses:

General: agapelearningcentre@hotmail.com

Daycare Office: agape.daycare@hotmail.com

ECS/Kindergarten: agapeecs@hotmail.com

Philosophy

The Kindergarten & ECS programs philosophy is inclusive, bias free and based on the concept of Learning through Play and modeling. The goal of our program is to provide the necessary education, developmental activities and opportunities for each child to reach their full potential in life, physically, socially, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Play is the most important role in the learning process of the child so it is a major component of the program. Play is a valuable and important way for children to learn. It provides the opportunity for active learning and for children to master skills that will be used later in more formal study. Our focus in all activities will be the process rather than the product. We are more concerned with exploration and experience of the task rather than the outcome. We will cover all areas of development throughout the program. Learning



centers provide focus for play, some of which include house keeping/dramatic play, sand, water, science, listening center/music/stories, books, puzzles, woodworking, etc. Young children see the world differently than older students and adults, and they learn best through direct, sensory experience. They need to manipulate, explore and experiment with real objects. They learn by doing, moving, talking. Educators and psychologists refer to play as the serious work of childhood.

The Kindergarten teacher, with Early Learning training, will oversee the program as well as being involved in Individualized Program Plans and evaluations.

Curriculum

We use the Alberta Curriculum and the Early Learning Framework. Like your child's development their learning is never stagnant. As your child develops, masters new skills and demonstrates an array of interests, curriculum focuses on these areas which are relevant and meaningful in your child's life. The approach is determined by teachers following the child's lead and initiative and allowing the curriculum to explore varied and diverse directions. The teachers observe developmental milestones in the different areas of development. Once a teacher records these observations, planning then takes place to extend, practice and master skills and activities leading to overall development.

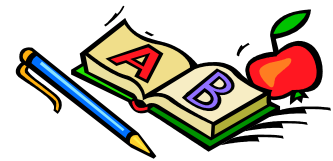
We believe that teaching involves observing, listening and responding, redirecting and guiding children's actions, reactions, interests, talk and questions. Through daily routines (i.e. bathrooming, tidy up, lunch, snack, dressing...) children can learn many life skills.



Kindergarten Program Statement

The Kindergarten Program Statement, developed by Alberta Education, describes clear expectations in seven learning areas:

- * Early Literacy
- * Mathematics
- * Citizenship and Identity
- * Environment and Community Awareness
- * Personal and Social Responsibility
- * Physical Skills and Well-being
- * Creative Expression



For more information on each area, please check out the kindergarten program statement in more detail on:

www.learnalberta.ca/content/mychildlearning

Registration Forms



Each parent must fill out and return a completed registration form to the centre. This form provides us with important background information on your child as well as necessary medical information and emergency contact people in the event parents are unavailable. It is the parent's responsibility to notify their child's teacher of any changes throughout the year.

Illness

Children are not permitted to attend school when they are:

- * vomiting
- * fever of 38 degrees Celsius or higher
- * Diarrhea and/or
- * A new and unexplained rash or cough



Your child may return when they are symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Please phone the centre (587-486-8066) when your child will be absent due to illness. If your child becomes ill while at the centre we will contact you to pick them up. If we are unable to reach you, we will phone your emergency contact person.

Medication

If medication is required, parents must send medication (prescription, non-prescription or any other non-medicated cream) for their child in the original containers. **Staff cannot administer any medication for which a parent has not completed one of the centre's medication forms.**



Lunches & Snacks

Each parent is responsible for providing a healthy lunch along with two additional snacks for their child each school day. Heat up lunches must be kept to a minimal and may only be heated for a maximum of one minute due to time constraints. Please do not send suckers, candy, or "junk food" in general. They will be sent home unpacked. Please do not send any food containing nut products. We understand some items may come from a factory that may produce nuts, however; nuts of any kind are not allowed.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of accidents which appear to require immediate medical attention, parents will be notified and 911 will be called. If medical attention seems advisable but the injury is not serious, parents will be contacted and notified of the situation. Every attempt will be made to keep parents informed of minor cuts and bruises and their causes. Incident forms will be filled out by staff and a copy kept in the child's file. A copy can be given to the parent on request.



Allergies/Other Reactions

If your child has any known allergies, especially to foods, please make sure all pertinent information is added to the registration form. We are an allergy aware school and will do our best to minimize all reactions and allergy concerns. Also, we are saying no peanut nuts/tree nuts and require support from our families to maintain a school without nuts and items that may contain nuts.

Snacks that are being provided by parents are to contain NO nuts or even products that may be made in a factory that contains nuts. (Please read labels carefully, products that say may contain nuts or are not from a nut free factory will not be acceptable for a group snack)

Fire Drills/Lock Down Drills

Agape Kindergarten/ECS will participate in fire drills throughout the year. This will guide the students with safe practices and what to do in the case of emergencies. We will be having a minimum of 6 fire drills throughout the year and one lock down.

Sensory Room

At Agape we have a sensory room which was built in the fall of 2014 and has been a great enhancement to our program. It is a safe, non-threatening environment in order to calm or stimulate children through their senses. Many children need the controlled environmental stimulation to engage in appropriate sensory activities. It is also a space where children can experience and learn the pre requisite skills to some curriculum activities. Its primary focus is to help children learn to calm and self-regulate.

Report Cards

Throughout the year, the teacher will observe and record children's learning and progress in relation to the expectations for the seven learning areas included in the Kindergarten Program Statement. By observing children many times in different situations the teacher is better able to build a more complete assessment of their learning.

Report Cards will be completed three times throughout the year with the kindergarten children and two times with ECS children. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's teacher.

Community Participation

Many people from the community contribute to the Kindergarten/ECS program. Visitors may come to the class to expand upon topics of interest. At other times the children will supplement their classroom learning by going on field trips to places within the community. These activities, along with family functions and special celebrations, help children build an understanding of the world around them. Of course, parents are encouraged to participate in this special first year!



Discipline Policy

The Kindergarten/ECS environment will be equipped and time structured to minimize the need for disciplinary action. Children will be given limits that are clearly defined and consistently maintained. Discipline will be used as a positive approach to child guidance, which will teach children self-control and responsible self-direction. Behavior modification may be required for children with special needs under professional guidance. Proactive strategies will be used throughout the day to

Agape prohibits the use of corporal and/or abusive verbal punishment in the disciplining of children for negative behavior. Instead the staff will assist the children in dealing with their problems in a positive and constructive manner:

- *time away to a designated quiet area to regroup
- *a quiet talk
- *re-direction to another activity
- *developmentally appropriate natural and logical consequences



Children will not be allowed to hurt themselves, others, or damage property.

The staff will use positive behaviour strategies to teach limits by:

- Staff will redirect a child from an unacceptable activity to one that is more appropriate.
- When necessary, staff will discuss the incident with the child in an age appropriate and developmentally appropriate manner, which will teach the child self-control and responsible self-direction.
- Children will be encouraged to resolve own problems.
- Social stories will be used to teach specific social skills.
- Positive Behaviour Support Plan may be required for children with challenging behaviours under professional guidance.
- Gross motor/sensory room proactive breaks
- Fidgets
- Weighted items
- Modified seating
- Timers
- Prepping and prompting before activity change
- Visuals for daily schedule and expectations
- Chewlery as needed

Custody and Access

Parents are encouraged to share with the staff any unusual problems regarding guardianship. The school will not be involved in custody disputes and can not stray from information provided in Parenting Orders or Custody agreements. Parents are required to provide the most recent copies of these to the school office. If no parenting order or custody agreement has been provided, the school must assume that both parents have equal access and must provide it.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a regular part of the school day. Children are expected to participate in all parts of the regular school day. All children are expected to go outside. If children are too ill to go outside, they are considered too ill to be at school.

Anaphylaxis Protocol

When a child is identified with an anaphylactic condition, the school will follow a number of procedures.

1. A letter will be sent home to all class parents requesting that food that contains harmful allergens not be sent to school as a snack, lunch, etc.
2. There will be a classroom rule of ‘no sharing food’.
3. The allergens involved will not be allowed in the classroom.

Monthly Newsletters

Around the first of the month, a newsletter will be emailed to you to let you know what we have been learning in our class and what we will be doing in the coming month. We will also tell you about special events and important class and school news. Paper copies of newsletters can be sent out instead of email at the parent’s request. There is also an app “Class Dojo” which parents will be invited to join for additional communication.

Class Dojo

Class Dojo is a school communication platform that teachers, students and families use every day to build close-knit communities by sharing what's being learned in the classroom through photos, videos, and messages.

Clothing

All children are to be dressed appropriately according to the weather as outdoor play is a regular part of the program. Flip flops are not appropriate for running and climbing in the gym or on the playground equipment therefore we ask that children either wear or bring along runners to change into



We also ask that you send a change of clothes for your child. A back pack would be a great place to store these clothes in as well as providing an easy way to take home art activities, newsletters and other items. All items must go home daily as the lockers are used by the next class the other days.

Technology

Technology will be used as another tool for intentional learning materials and used in balance with other materials. The children's play will always be priority and developmentally appropriate. Technology will be used to support learning through play. Co-viewing, as Early Learning Educator and child is the best way to monitor viewing and enhance the learning through dialogue.

Registration Fee

Parents will be required to provide a non-refundable \$50.00 registration fee to secure their child's space in the program.

Your child will not be registered into the program until the following has been returned to the center:

1. Completed Registration Form and Authorization Medical Card
2. Copy of Birth Certificate
3. If not a Canadian Citizen, a copy of the permanent resident card is required
4. \$50 registration fee
5. ECS CHILDREN ONLY: ASQ/ASQ SE (parent questionnaire) or an assessment from Children's Allied Health or an alternate professional

