



Handbook

Located in École St. Matthew School
1508 Arlington Avenue
(306) 659-7820

Philosophy

The purpose of the Mes Amis Preschool Program is to promote the physical, intellectual, social, emotional and aesthetic growth of three and four-year-old children. This will be accomplished through the curriculum, which has been planned with the following goals in mind.

Goals

- To help your child recognize him/herself as a valuable individual through achievement and praise
- To encourage socialization through co-operation, sharing and being sensitive to others
- To give opportunities for language and speech development by encouraging your child to verbalize in structured activities
- To encourage your child to express him/herself in creative ways through the introduction of various materials and equipment
- To develop an appreciation and interest in music and books
- To develop small and large muscle co-ordination through indoor/outdoor exercise activity and manipulative table toy play
- To increase your child's awareness of the world in which he/she lives through interest centres and field trips
- To develop an interest in learning French
- To develop linguistic concepts through themes

- To expose your child to a French cultural environment - songs, stories, activities
- To help develop oral communication skills in French.

Program Readiness

The program starts in September and runs until the end of June. Any child registering for the 3-year old program must be 3 years old on or before September 1st. Any child registering for the 4-year old program must be 4 on or before January 31st. The Pre-school will not accept 'early entrants' to the program

It is imperative that all children entering the preschool are toilet trained (no pull-ups). Children starting preschool should be able to work and play independently for short periods, to focus on one project or task for several minutes, to follow simple instructions, and to sit still for a few minutes for group activities such as circle time. It is also helpful if your child has had some experience in playing with other children.

If you are questioning your child's readiness for preschool you may want to consider these points.

- Does my child have some same age playmates?
- Is he/she able to share?
- Is he/she ready to take turns and/or participate in other group activities?
- Can he/she be away from the principal caregiver?
- Is he/she toilet trained?
- Is he/she able to communicate feelings to adults or other children?

Please be aware that this information is only to serve as a reference. You as a parent/guardian are best able to determine your child's needs.

Enrolment

The maximum enrolment in any session will be 16 children for the 4 year old classes and 12 children for the 3 year old classes. Enrolment for the split classes will be determined by the Board and the teacher, and will be based on the ages of the children enrolled.

Enrolled children must be medically fit and must be toilet trained. Pull-up diapers/training pants do not constitute a child being toilet trained. It is reasonable to assume a child of 3 or 4 years of age might have a "bathroom accident". For this reason a spare change of clothing is brought to school on the first day of class and left in the classroom until the end of the school year. Any exceptions are subject to the approval of the Teacher and the Board of Directors.

Applicants whose children have medical problems will be asked to come and visit a whole session of the Pre-school. If the child is eligible to attend, a medical certificate from the child's doctor will be required stating the child's ability to participate in physical activity.

Enrolment shall commence from the date of acceptance of the child's completed application form, agreement and volunteer forms, payment of the membership and registration fees, and post-dated tuition fee cheques.

Children with special needs may be enrolled in any of the classes offered at the Pre-school at the discretion of the Teacher(s) and the Board of Directors. However, if a child with special

needs requires additional help from a professional caregiver, the parents/guardians are required to find a suitable person to assist their child.

Payment

Upon receipt of an NSF cheque, Mes Amis' treasurer will contact the parent/guardian and request a new cheque be given to the preschool prior to the 1st of the new month. The Executive will only allow the child to attend the preschool on the 1st of the next month if payment has been received. If reimbursement is not received by that time, the Executive will no longer allow that child to attend the preschool until payment is received. A second NSF cheque may, at the discretion of the Executive, be assessed a \$5.00 NSF charge.

Upon receipt of a **third** NSF cheque the Executive will no longer accept post-dated cheques for tuition and will require tuition paid by cash or certified cheque from your financial institution. The Executive will also request a meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the situation further and assess alternatives if there are any difficulties with tuition payments. A letter will be given to the parent/guardian to this effect.

Withdrawal

At the request of the Teacher and the consent of the Board of Directors a child may be asked to withdraw for reasons of immaturity, health problems or consistently disruptive social behaviour that interferes with the successful operation of the Pre-school.

- Should the parent/guardian wish to withdraw the child, 30 days WRITTEN notice must be received by Mes Amis Preschool Parent Executive by the first of the month.
- If notice of 30 days is not given upon withdrawal of the child from preschool, the following one month's tuition will be retained and all other post-dated cheques returned to the parent/guardian, with the exception of September and June.
- If the child is withdrawn in the last month of the preschool term, item (a) above will not apply
- No refund will be made until written notice is received.
- Mes Amis Preschool Board reserves the right to withdraw any child for health, discipline or other reasonable cause at any time.
- Written notice to the Registrar must be provided by the 1st of the month prior to the month of withdrawal in order to receive a refund in tuition.
- (E.g. If you wish to withdraw your child starting March 1st, notification must be received by February 1st in order to receive a refund.)

Supplies for the First Day of School

Each child should bring:

- a backpack (handy for carrying library books, newsletters from the teacher, crafts, etc.)

- a change of clothes/underwear in a labelled zip-loc type bag (this will remain in the preschool classroom)
- a pair of indoor, non-marking shoes which are labelled (these will also remain in the preschool classroom)
- a snack - Snack time is provided during class: please send along a healthy snack and beverage.

Ecole St. Matthew School is a designated Allergy Alert environment. **DO NOT SEND ANY SNACKS THAT CONTAIN NUTS**, as there are children in the school and/or classroom with life-threatening nut allergies.

Sharing

On the monthly calendar in your child's mailbox each month, each child will be assigned a specific day to bring an item for sharing (show and tell). The teacher will mark the bottom of the calendar with the show and tell topic of that month and some ideas on the kind of items your child can bring. Please do not bring other toys to class outside those sharing days.

Health

When your child is not feeling well (cold, cough, fever, upset stomach or more serious disease or illness) please keep him/her at home. If your child will be missing school, please call 306-659-7820 and leave a message for Madame. Messages are checked at the beginning and end of each class session.

In case of a serious illness or disease, please notify the teacher immediately so other parents/guardians can be informed.

Please follow your doctor's advice concerning the return of your child to school following a communicable disease.

Children's Safety

The parent/guardian is responsible for their child's safe transportation to and from school. This includes escorting them into the preschool room, helping them remove outerwear, and helping them put on their inside shoes.

To maintain a clean school environment, preschool children should place their outdoor footwear on the racks inside the main doors of the school. Mats are also provided inside the front entrance for parents'/guardians' outdoor footwear. Coat hooks are located inside the preschool room.

For the morning session, drop-off time is at 9:00 a.m., and pick-up time is at 11:30 a.m.

For the afternoon session, drop-off time is at 12:45 p.m., and pick-up time is at 3:15 p.m.

Field Trips

Several times throughout the year the teacher will be taking the classes on field trips. The teacher relies on the help and support of parents/guardians to make these trips successful. Please ensure that you participate in your share of these trips so that the responsibility is evenly distributed between parents/guardians. Our goal is a 4:1 student to adult ratio. Some field trips and/or the type of activity may require more adult participation.

Regular Activities Outside of the Classroom

The preschool children have access to the library located in École St. Matthew School. Children are allowed to take home one book a week. Please remember to return the library book by the following week so they are able to take out a new one.

During the fall and spring months, the preschool children regularly access the school playground. They are also able to access the school gymnasium on a regular basis. In the winter months, they occasionally use the toboggan hill located on the school grounds. The teacher will communicate when these days will occur so that you can dress your child accordingly.

Parent/Guardian Helpers

A parent/guardian helper is needed every class to assist the teacher in the smooth running of the classroom. Under Saskatchewan's Child Care Regulations, section 52(4), the Ministry of Education requires a second adult be present in the class at all times to maintain the children's safety, and to enhance your child's learning experience. Parents/guardians are asked to volunteer as a parent/guardian helper one day every six weeks. Grandparents or other family members are welcome to fill this role. There are times our teacher would be open to a younger sibling accompanying the parent/guardian helper. Please check regarding your particular situation.

A calendar sign-up sheet will be available on orientation day for the September-December period and at the Christmas party for the January-June period. If a day does not have a volunteer, a board member will contact parents/guardians in an attempt to fill the vacancy. In the rare event there are no volunteers willing to help on a given day, classes for that day will be canceled.

If circumstances change for your day, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to fill that helper spot. Please keep the class list of parent/guardian telephone numbers handy in case you need to arrange a trade or a switch. We require all classroom helpers to provide an up-to-date (from no longer than 6 months prior to school start) police criminal record check before working inside the preschool. Criminal record checks are valid with Mes Amis for the duration of the school year. Our teacher has fee-waiver

forms available for those who choose to complete this check in person. Please return completed criminal record checks to the teacher.

When you are a parent/guardian helper please arrive at class at 8:55am for the morning class and 12:45 for the afternoon class in order to help the teacher set up for that class. At the end of the session, please remain until the class is tidy and all children have been picked-up.

- Parent/guardian helpers are asked to assist the children as needed and to encourage them to do things on their own.
- Encourage the children to use their “inside” voices to keep noise levels down.
- Children are not allowed to hurt others or others’ property.
- Materials are to be used properly and to be put away when not in use.
- Use positive suggestions to the children (i.e.: “please walk” rather than “don’t run”).
- Do not use comparisons between children.
- Talk to the children at their own level, squat down and make eye contact.
- Showing an attitude of fairness can encourage sharing. (If a child is not sharing a ball for example, suggest he/she bounce it 3 times and then gives someone else a turn).
- If assisting children to print their names, make sure that it starts with a capital.
- Move around the classroom. There is always something to do.
- Dress appropriately in clothing that is comfortable and can withstand paint, glue, etc. Remember, you will be interacting with the children on their level.
- If you have any craft, game, or musical ideas please share them with the teacher.
- Expect your child to behave differently on your parent helper days. If difficulties arise, explain to your child that you need to help everyone or have another parent or teacher help them as necessary.

The following is a list of specific parent helper duties:

- At designated cleanup times, assist the teacher and children by putting toys away and cleaning up the areas (washing tables, putting blocks away, etc.).
- Participate in circle activities by sitting on the floor and joining in. Children learn by example. If a child is having a hard time coping offer to sit near that child.
- End of the day clean-up as requested by teacher.

Classroom Management

The teacher is ultimately responsible for classroom management. The form of discipline we support at preschool is removal of the child from the activity until the child is ready to rejoin with appropriate behaviour.

Removal would only occur following verbal corrections, and modeling of appropriate behaviour. If the inappropriate behaviour persists, the child would be removed for a period of minutes, given direction as to how to modify the behaviour and then asked to rejoin the group.

Respect for the child and his/her feelings will be combined with the need to support the child as his/her develops an understanding of appropriate behaviour.

At times the parent/guardian helper may be in a better situation to deal with the problem. Often it involves simply reminding the child of inappropriate behaviour.

Parent/Guardian - Teacher Communications

Any concerns should first be expressed and discussed with the teacher. If extra time is needed to discuss parent/guardian or teacher concerns, parent/guardian-teacher interviews can be arranged by either party.

If the issue does not pertain to the teacher, please contact a board member or e-mail mesamispreschool13@gmail.com

There is a list of the board members with their positions and email addresses on the wall behind the teacher's desk.

E-mail newsletters are the basic means of communication with the parents/guardians. They will be written monthly to inform you of events in the upcoming month and e-mailed to each family.

If Madame can be of special help to you or your child, feel free to contact her at the Preschool 306-659-7820 or leave a message.

Board of Directors

A volunteer parent-led board is responsible for establishing, promoting, and supporting a non-profit, French Immersion preschool located at École St. Matthew School. The Board considers and discusses all subjects affecting the preschool. Parents/guardians are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting in May. Parents can contact the Chair to be added to the agenda at a monthly board meeting. Any concerns or ideas you may have or want to share would be greatly appreciated. Minutes from each board meeting are recorded and held on record by the secretary. Minutes of the AGM can be provided to any stakeholder upon request.

Feel free to contact any member of the preschool board if you have any questions or concerns. We can be reached at mesamispreschool13@gmail.com. We look forward to the upcoming year being a positive experience for everyone.

The integration of the preschool into École St. Matthew School provides the children with an introduction to the school environment, as well as access to the library and gymnasium. Please note: Mes Amis is a non-denominational preschool.

WELCOME TO ÉCOLE ST. MATTHEW SCHOOL

École St. Matthew School provides quality instruction in a warm, caring and spiritually enriched atmosphere. Its main features are:

- A Catholic education with strong emphasis on Christian values and daily prayer and reflection along with quality academic and physical education programs (we have a strong connection with Holy Spirit Parish)
- A single-stream French Immersion Program
- Strong parental involvement

École St. Matthew School offers:

- Caring and dedicated staff to implement a curriculum, which includes instruction in both French and English.
- Learning Assistance Teacher to support students with diverse needs
- A library with a variety of materials to support curriculum and research-based learning in both French and English.
- A computer lab with 30 computers
- Band program starting in Grade 6
- Nutrition Positive and In Motion programs
- House Leagues and extra-curricular sports programs
- A large playground with access to a toboggan hill
- Activities for students throughout the year such as: Lenten activities, skiing, skating, playdays, care partners.

Our parent community is welcoming, active and personal. Most parents are not of French background and do not speak French, but they want to provide their children with the opportunity to learn a second language. Our Home and School Association provides numerous activities throughout the year such as: Family Ties Dance, Fun Night, Hot Lunches for the students once a month (organized by room parents) and a “Schools Win Twice” fundraiser.

École St. Matthew’s long-standing association with the Luther Special Care Home exemplifies our school’s approach to community involvement. Children participate in special programs with and for residents.

École St. Matthew also offers a “Before and After School Program” run by the YMCA and available on school days from 7:15 a.m. to 8:50 a.m. and from 3:15 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. for students up to the age of 12.

*Please note: Instructional time at Ecole St. Matthew begins at 8:55 a.m. and goes until 3:30 p.m. We ask that the noise level in the hallway be kept to a minimum during those times. Thank you for your cooperation.