

Pied Piper Co-operative Preschool of Hamilton Inc.



ORIENTATION HANDBOOK

Revised March 2008

The following **MUST** be completed prior to your child starting school:

- ✓ Admission forms
- ✓ Child Pick-Up
- ✓ Police Record Check (for participating duty parent/caregivers only)
- ✓ TB Test (for participating duty parent/caregivers only)
- ✓ Medical
- ✓ Fees
- ✓ Policy book

About the School

History of Pied Piper

Pied Piper Co-operative Preschool Inc. started with a morning program in 1961 in the Mountain YMCA on Upper Wellington. We moved to Southgate Presbyterian Church on Clarendon Avenue in 1965, where we stayed for 10 years. In 1975, we moved to Linden Park School on Vickers Road. In 1990, we moved into the Barton Stone United Church at Stonechurch and Upper James, where we remain today.

Our school was incorporated in 1975 under the Co-operative Corporations Act, and each year we file the necessary forms to remain in good standing with the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations.

Philosophy

At Pied Piper Preschool, the co-operative experience is ideal for families who want to take an active part in the early years of their child's education. Each child and parent/caregiver is respected for the unique individual that he or she is.

Our aim is to provide an environment where children learn through play and interaction. We provide positive opportunities for healthy physical, social, emotional, intellectual, and language development. Parent education is also provided through participation in the preschool program, meetings, and other activities of our school.

With the help of our teachers, parent/caregivers and each other, our children develop confidence and independence in a secure, comfortable, and accepting environment.

Leadership

Each child has one parent/caregiver who is a member of our school. An executive board, elected from the membership is responsible for running the preschool, administering the finances, organizing fundraising activities, ensuring compliance with the by-laws and regulations and planning all general meetings.

Teacher	in charge of planning and implementation of a good preschool program
President	shall chair all meetings; provide direction and leadership; represent the school to the community
Vice President	shall carry out the role of the President if absence of the President, shall handle all media, marketing and advertising of the school
Treasurer	shall handle all monies of the school; set up the annual budget and present the annual financial statement to be approved by the membership
Fundraiser	shall organize all fundraising projects with a committee; shall keep records of all monies raised by each family; shall inform members of their fundraising status
Secretary	shall record and keep minutes of all meetings; takes attendance at Membership meetings
Membership Secretary	shall handle all applications and registrations; generates class lists
Scheduler	shall make up a schedule of participating parent/caregivers each month by the 20 th of the preceding month; shall keep track of number of duty days each parent/caregiver had done

The Co-operative Experience

At Pied Piper Preschool, the parent/caregiver takes an active role in the school. They will participate in the following.

Programs

- Toddler Program (2 day) maximum 10 children and runs 9:30 – 11:40 Tuesdays and Thursdays
Children generally turn 2 between March and December of the school year
- Preschool Program (2 day) maximum 16 children and runs 9:15 – 11:40 Tuesdays and Thursdays
Children are at least 31 months of age at the start of the school year. In addition, 20% of the children can be 27 – 30 months
- Preschool Program (3 day) maximum 16 children and runs 9:15 – 11:40 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays
Children are at least 31 months of age at the start of the school year. In addition, 20% of the children can be 27 – 30 months

Daily Schedule

See the daily schedules posted in the classrooms

Membership Meetings

Membership meetings are mandatory and will be held on dates approved by the Executive. Meeting dates will be scheduled and posted in advance, and reminders are sent out in the newsletters. There will be approximately four meetings in a school year including an Annual General Meeting.

The executive may call an additional emergency meeting with notice given. Special meetings may be called by 1/10 of the General Membership for the purpose of Co-operative business.

When a member must be absent from a Membership Meeting, he/she must notify the Membership Secretary prior to the meeting is responsible for obtaining all significant information he/she missed. Failure to attend more than one meeting will result in a \$25 charge to be taken from your commitment cheque.

It is necessary to restrict attendants to ADULTS ONLY. Please arrange for a babysitter for your children.

Fundraising Options

Fundraising is optional. You may opt to pay a small monthly fee rather than fundraise. For those who choose to fundraise, there are many different options during the school year. Some examples include; Walk-a-thon, Bowl-a-thon, MacMillans, World's Finest Chocolates and Movie Night.

Clean Up Duty

Parent/caregivers are to sign up for 2 clean up days per school year. The teachers will advise what areas, toys and equipment needs to be cleaned. If you do not fulfill this obligation, you will be charged \$25 and this will taken from your commitment cheque.

Duty Days

You will assist the teacher in the classroom up to three times a month. Your responsibilities may include cleaning, ensuring safe play, hand washing and preparing snack time. See Daily Clean Up Duties posted in classrooms.

The scheduler must be notified by the 15th of the preceding month if there are any duty days that you cannot do.

Our license with the Ministry of Community and Social Services requires that we have our ratio of adults to children or we cannot operate our classes. Once the schedule is out, YOU are responsible making a change with another parent/caregiver and informing the teachers and the scheduler. Class may be cancelled, if there are not enough duty parent/caregivers for the number of children at school that day.

If there is a last minute emergency, call the school and the teacher will try and get another parent/caregiver. If no other parent/caregiver can cover you, you will be charged \$25 to be taken from your commitment cheque. If you miss a second duty day, you and your child will be withdrawn from the school.

Committees

Committees are developed to help run the different aspects of the school. Every member is required to serve on one committee during the school year. Some examples include; laundry, play dough, Christmas party planning, or Executive.

Field Trips

There will be several field trips in every year. Parent/caregivers must attend with their children. If a parent/caregiver does not wish a child to go on a particular trip, it is the parent/caregiver's responsibility to notify the teacher. The child will not come to school on that trip day.

Birthdays

A child who celebrates his/her birthday during the school year will have a special day with a birthday hat and the other children will sing Happy Birthday. It is acceptable to bring in a special treat for snack (please note – we are a nut-free school). The child may also bring a new book for our school, marked with the child's name and birth date so we can always be reminded of your child's involvement with the school. We will have a special "Un-Birthday Party" day for those children with summer birthdays.

Newsletters

Every one or two months, we will send out a newsletter. In it will be listed upcoming themes and events, and any requirements of special materials that are needed.

Wish Tree

On our wish tree are leaves or apples with the supplies and crafts that we could use at Pied Piper. These items might include egg cartons, toilet rolls, baby food jars, cotton balls, paper, books etc.

Art Work Folders

Please check the artwork folders daily. They will be outside the main room, and will include artwork, and any communication from the teachers and Executive.

Snack

Each child should bring a healthy snack each school day. It should consist of a drink and 1-2 food items (please note – we are a nut-free school).

Clothing

Do not send your children in good clothes, as they may be painting or gluing that day. Also, only rubber soled shoes or slippers in the classroom. Party shoes or wet boots may be a hazard on our climber and in our gross-motor area.

Please bring a spare set of clothes (and diapers if not trained) and leave in the children's cubby, to be taken home daily. We have a water play area, where children often get wet, and toileting accidents are to be expected. Please be aware of your child's clothes if they are toilet training. A pair of loose-fitting sweat pants could avoid an accident.

To get paint out of clothes, soak stained area with dish washing detergent. Let stand for 30 minutes. Add a little water and work stain out with your fingers. Rinse. Repeat if necessary. Wash as normal.

Pick Up

No child can be picked up by an adult that is not on the pick-up form originally filled out at the beginning of the year. Additions and deletions can be made by informing the teacher. Children must be picked up promptly at the end of each class. There is a late fee of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes. Repeated failure to pick your child up on time will result in your being asked to withdraw from the program.

Integration

Pied Piper Preschool has an approved Integration Program. Individual programs are developed for these children by a Resource Teacher from the Hamilton District Council of Co-operative Preschools Inc. There may also be a Support Facilitator to the school to help. Children with special needs may include: delays in Language Development, Physical Development or Social Development.

Children of these ages are very accepting of all children and our integration program offers a wonderful opportunity for all children of varying rates of skills and development to interact together and learn from one another. See the teachers if you have any questions about this.

Illness

Parent/caregivers are required to keep home any child showing signs of fatigue or ill health. Any child sent to school who shows signs of illness may be sent home at the discretion of the teacher.

School Days

The school start and end dates will be determined by Executive on a year to year basis.

The school will be closed on Thanksgiving, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, 2 weeks at Christmas, 1 week at March Break.

There are also 2 professional development days each year for the teachers, where the school will be closed.

Restrictions

There is to be no smoking in the school area or in or around the building. There is to be no gum chewing by adults or children while in the building. Hot beverages are not permitted around the children, either in the classroom or in the coat change areas.

Fees

Our fee schedule will be revised each year and given at our Annual General Meeting. Post-dated cheques, for the 1st of each month from September until June, are required for the entire year prior to your child's first day of school. Full fees are required for holidays and breaks.

There will be a fee of \$25 for any NSF Cheque. It must be replaced with cash, money order or certified cheque before your child can return to class.

Two commitment cheques dated December 1st and April 1st must be submitted prior to starting your child in the school. If all obligations are met, these cheques will be returned to you at the end of the school year.

50% of your fundraising goal must be met by December 31st, and the remaining 50% must be met by April 30th.

Non-participating families must add \$50 to each monthly cheque.

If you are opting out of fundraising, ask the Membership Secretary the required monthly payment. As well, if you don't meet your 50% requirement in December and April, you can pay the difference instead of having your commitment cheque cashed.

Registration fees are 50% off if all paperwork and cheques are submitted by May 31st for the following school year. A registration fee may be fully refunded prior to July 31st after which an administration fee is charged. If a child starts in the school between January and May, they may receive a reduced registration fee.

Refunds will not be made when the school is temporarily closed due to emergency conditions. Refunds will not be made for absence of a child due to an illness of two weeks duration or less.

Third party cheques are never allowed. All cheques must be made to Pied Piper Co-operative Preschool.

Allergies

Make sure the teachers are aware of any allergies your child may have. These will be posted in the snack area.

By-laws

Our by-laws are available by asking the teacher or President for a copy.

Policies

Our policies must be read by every parent/caregiver prior to the child starting school.

Charity Receipts

We are a registered charity, and can issue charity receipts to anyone donating cash or cheque. We can also provide a charity receipt for a donation with a value of at least \$50.

Withdrawal

A parent/caregiver will be asked to withdraw a child due to the child's inability to adjust to the school or to the parent/caregiver's failure to participate. A rebate will be made for the child's last day. Discussion between the Staff, Executive and family will be held prior to asking for the withdrawal.

Whereas a parent/caregiver desires to withdraw a child, a written letter must be submitted, giving no less than 2 weeks notice, must be sent to the Membership Secretary. You must fulfill any duty days within that 2 weeks.

If a child is absent for more than 2 weeks due to illness, the parent/caregiver would contact the Membership Secretary, and the child's place will be held in the school for a month without payment of tuition fees.

Hygienic Practices

A child's clothes must be changed if they become wet or soiled

Children must wash hands with soap and water before and after snack time.

Children must wash hands with soap and water after using the washroom.

Teachers will change soiled diapers.

If a mess is made in the washroom, duty parent/caregivers must clean up.

Clean up solution consists of 1 capful of bleach to 1 pail of water. Everything must be cleaned and then rinsed with clear water.

Rules and Hints

Walk indoors

Children should wear aprons in the painting and water play areas

A child who has a toy may keep it until he/she is finished, another child who wants it must share or wait his/her turn, or find another toy

Climber: no going up the slide or down the ladder. No sliding head first on back. Climber can only be used when directly supervised by an adult. A STOP sign remains on the climber when not supervised.

Sand stays in the sandbox and water stays in the water basin. One child per side of sand and water tables. Maximum 4 children in each area at any one time.

All painting stays on the paper at easel or table. Adults hang up art work to dry to avoid children pinching their fingers.

Limit or stop a child's activity if he/she is hurting himself, others, destroying equipment, or involved in excessive loud and boisterous play. Break up the game and suggest one or all of the children involved come to another activity and help them get settled.

Let the children know that you are there to help them, but give them the space to be self-sufficient and independent.

Give the children the feeling that you understand how he/she feels

If the child makes the initial move, it is OK to hold him/her

Avoid a relationship that leads to excitement and over stimulation. The children need calmness. Watch the pitch of your voice, and avoid competitive play.