



Frequently Asked Questions

**** COVID information is included towards the end of the page.****

What programs do you offer?

LCDS offers programs for Kindergarten, Junior Kindergarten and Preschool. Our program is an inclusive integrated classroom where we combine children aged 3, 4 & 5 years old in the same classroom. The 5-year-olds are the role models for the 3 and 4-year-old children. Developmental expectations are different for each age group.

Are you part of the Edmonton Public or Catholic School Boards?

We are not a part of Edmonton Public or Catholic School Boards. We are our own independent school board. LCDS is a registered non-profit government society/charity. We are an independent/private Kindergarten/ECS (Early Childhood Services) program approved by Alberta Education and we are licensed with Child and Youth Care Services for preschool. We are proud members of AISCA (the Association of Independent Schools & Colleges of Alberta) and NAPTA (Northern Alberta Preschool Teachers Association).

Do you charge monthly fees for Preschool or Junior Kindergarten?

Yes. At the time of receiving your child's registration form, we charge a one-time non-refundable membership and an administration fee per family. The monthly fee for preschool depends on the number of days you choose for your child to attend. If you are choosing to register your child for Junior Kindergarten, you will commit to register for either 4 or 5 attendance days and your child will join the Kindergarten children for the earlier start times. Society registration commitments apply to all registered families. See the Program Fees tab under Registration on the school website.

Do you charge monthly fees for Kindergarten?

There are no monthly fees charged for eligible Kindergarten registrations, the Alberta Government funds Kindergarten enrollment and we receive a base instruction funding grant for each enrolled kindergarten child to cover school operational costs. As we are an Independent/Private Kindergarten, we do charge a one-time non-refundable registration fee per family at the time of receiving your child's registration form and a one-time material fee to cover the cost of materials used throughout the school year. Society registration commitments apply to all registered families. See the Program Fees tab under Registration on the school website.

How is the Kindergarten program different from preschool?

Kindergarten children attend class 5 days per week and arrive at school earlier than preschool children. In this time period, the children work on kindergarten curriculum goals through worksheets and individual instruction with the teacher. The preschool children arrive for a later entry time and have free play for the first part of the class; the kindergarten children will join the rest of the children for free play, as soon as, they finish their individual work. The remainder of the class routine is designed to offer an introduction to the kindergarten curriculum concepts for all children but will reinforce the concepts taught to the kindergarten children during their individual work time. Kindergarten children provide the role model for behavior and leadership in the classroom and are given extra learning activities throughout the school year. Kindergarten follows the curriculum set by Alberta Education.

How old does my child need to be?

For preschool, your child will need to be at least 3 years old and completely independent in toileting (no pull-ups) and in using the washroom cubicle.

For Junior Kindergarten your child will need to turn 5 years old between January 1st and May 31st (Junior Kindergarten is not funded by Alberta Education).

To be eligible for Kindergarten in Alberta your child will need to be 5 years old before December 31st of the intended school year.

Do you follow the Alberta Education Curriculum?

Yes, we follow the Kindergarten Program Statement set forth by Alberta Education and the guidelines set forth by the Alberta Early Learning and Child Care Act.



Do you follow the same holiday schedule as Edmonton Public Schools and Edmonton Catholic Schools?

We follow a similar calendar to Edmonton Public and Catholic Schools in regards to public holidays and breaks; we do not follow the calendar for their designated Professional Development days, we may include some of our own Professional Development days.

What days will my child attend?

For preschool children, parents choose the days their child attends according to their schedule and the days which are available at the time they register. The days your child is registered for will be their attendance days for the entire year. For Junior Kindergarten, the children will attend 4 or 5 half days per week. For Kindergarten, the children attend 5 half days per week to ensure they receive at least a minimum of 475 instructional hours for the year as.

Do you take late registrations?

If the program is full, we will not be able to take any new registrations as we are licensed for a specific number of children by the Alberta Government. If the program is not full, we will take new registrations until the program is full. We will not take any new registrations for the current school year after March 1st.

***Due to COVID regulations we are restricted to cohorts of 30 children and staff members per class.*

Can I bring my child to sit in on a class?

Normally we would allow children to attend a trial class accompanied by a parent for the first part of the class, due to COVID regulations we are not able to provide this option at this time.

In a non-COVID environment, parents must pre-register with the school office for a trial class and attend with their child. Children must be 3 years old to participate in a trial class; otherwise, a parent may attend alone in order to view the class routine. Please make alternate arrangements for any siblings while attending the class. Trial classes are only offered from October until May of each school year.

Are you affiliated with Gateway Alliance Church?

The classroom and school office are rental spaces within the Church and we do not have any religious affiliation with the Church. We have been a long time renter in this wonderful space with a good working relationship with the church and the community.

Do you provide transportation?

Unfortunately, due to the small nature of our program, the costs for vehicle, licensed driver, insurance and special licensing is not affordable for our school. Students must be dropped off and picked up daily. We have a large parking lot and the students are not allowed out of the building unless accompanied by a staff member. The church has security cameras where we are able to monitor the parking lot and entry doors.

Is a subsidy available?

Subsidy is available through the Government of Alberta for those families who qualify; we recommend checking the Alberta Government website under childcare for updates to this program.

How many children and adults are in the classroom?

We are licensed for a maximum of 22 children per class per day but we limit the classes to 17 children per class per day. Kindergarten students are limited to 6 per class and preschool children fill the remainder of the class total. We have a Certificated Teacher (holding a Bachelor of Education Degree in Elementary Education and a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology) overseeing the program. We also employ qualified Educational Assistants in the classroom on a regular basis. We also include a daily parent volunteer to assist in various activities as needed. Your child will receive lots of one-to-one attention during the class learning time. *(COVID regulations do not allow for a parent volunteer in class at this time).*



Can I register for both the morning and the afternoon classes?

You can choose either class for your child to attend but not both. Daily programming is the same for both classes.

What are your class times?

We offer a morning class and an afternoon class.

Morning Class: Kindergarten & Jr. Kindergarten 8:45am – 11:45am; **Preschool children** 9:00am – 11:45am
Afternoon Class: Kindergarten & Jr. Kindergarten 12:45pm – 3:45pm; **Preschool children** 1:00pm – 3:45pm

Can I register my preschool child for all 5 days?

We recommend starting with 2 days per week/month for 3-year-olds. We recommend 2- 3 days per week for 3 ½ years to 4 ½-year-olds. Children in Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten are expected to attend at least 4 to 5 days per week/month. Extra days may be added with the approval of the teacher and the availability of extra days.

Do I have to volunteer?

Yes. As a parent cooperative program, LCDS parents and families are a big part of their children's success. Parents and guardians have the opportunity to be hands-on in their child's first educational experience, supporting their learning, experiencing their excitement and watching them make new friends. Parent volunteering also shows children that the adults in their life are interested in what they are doing and that helping others is important. Plus, we can elevate the quality of education by incorporating your experience in our learning. Our Board of Directors and various committee roles are filled by volunteer parents; they guide the overall administration and operations of the program. Being a part of the daily classroom also helps our parents learn new parenting /behavior management strategies that can be applied in the home.

**New changes to the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulation requires all parent volunteers to complete a volunteer criminal record check. This can be done online, the cost is \$15.00 and the school will provide you with a letter required with the application.*

***Classroom volunteering is suspended at this time due to COVID, but we still need your assistance with the operations of the program through volunteering on the Board of Directors, chairing a committee or taking materials home to assist with preparations for class projects, and participating in fundraising, Bingo events and Casino (when restrictions are lifted).*

Can I bring my other child(ren) to the parent helper day or on field trips?

Unfortunately, licensing and insurance regulations prevent us from having children in the classroom or on field trips that are not registered in the program; the exception to the regulation would be nursing babies that have not reached the crawling stage. We thank you for making alternate arrangements for siblings on your parent helper days.

Do you require families to participate in fundraising?

LCDS Members have chosen to pay a one (1) time Family Fundraising Fee (per family) per school year instead of running numerous fundraising events each year. The Family Fundraising Fee will be set each year at the Annual General Meeting in May. Members present at the AGM will discuss the fundraising requirements for the coming school year and will decide on the amount of the fee and the fundraising events to be offered. A tax donation receipt will be issued in the amount of the set fee.

What if I want to fundraise instead of paying the Family Fundraising Fee?

Families, who wish to fundraise instead of paying the Family Fundraising fee, must make this decision at the beginning of the school year; you may decide to fundraise for the full amount of the Family Fundraising Fee or pay half of the fee and fundraise the remaining half. The membership will decide on the number of fundraising events to be offered each year at the May Annual General Meeting. The fundraising events may include a 50/50 draw, walk-a-thon, poinsettia or spring flower orders, chocolate sales or specialty food (kielbasa, pizza kits, pierogis, etc.) sales.

Why does the school participate in Bingo and Casino events?

LCDS Preschool & Kindergarten participates in Bingo and Casino events to supplement our operational costs in order to rent our own space, employ a qualified certificated Teacher, qualified Educational Assistants, an Executive Director and a Business Manager. The yearly revenue from Bingo events yields on average \$10,000.00 to \$12,000.00 per year; Casino revenue averages between \$70,000.00 to \$90,000.00, every 18 – 24 months. The revenue from monthly fees does not cover the complete operational costs of the program.

***When are the Bingo and Casino events scheduled?***

To make it easier for our families we have asked to have our Bingo events scheduled for a Saturday or Sunday afternoon from 10:30 am – 4:00 pm at the Kensington Bingo Hall 12538-132 Avenue. We are generally scheduled for one Bingo event per month; we try to not have any dates scheduled through the summer months. Event dates are given out at our Annual General Meeting in May for members to sign up. At the Bingo event, you will be instructed in selling game cards to the patrons for \$1 or \$2 per card and to call back winning cards to the caller. You may also assist in the administration of cash and game cards in the office.

***Bingo Halls and Casino Halls have been closed due to COVID, we are still filling events as we are able to work them. Virtual Bingo is another option for us and volunteers will be asked to work as we are given events. Virtual Bingos are scheduled throughout the week during the evening.*

Can I opt-out of working Bingo or Casino?***My religion does not allow me to participate in gambling what options do I have?***

We have had many families who are opposed to any association with gambling who have been able to fulfill their commitments by paying for someone to work the shifts for them. Some have just made a donation to the school for the price of having someone work the shifts and we have found a worker for them. Bingo workers usually charge \$50.00 per shift and Casino workers are \$100.00 per shift.

How do you deal with allergies during snack time?

LCDS Preschool & Kindergarten is a "nut-free" classroom. We monitor all children's allergies and post them in the classroom. We also respect any food restrictions due to religion or personal beliefs and will ensure your child is not served something they cannot have. The school office will check all foods brought in and a second check may occur in the classroom. If an item has been brought in which cannot be served, we keep alternate safe snacks on hand for this situation.

Can we bring homemade snacks or prepare the snack at home?

Unfortunately, due to our Alberta Health licensing requirements, we are not able to accept any snacks which have been prepared at home including birthday cakes or cupcakes. All snack items or ingredients must be unopened packages and prepared in our licensed kitchen. We cannot use ingredients brought from home where the package has been opened or partially used. We keep emergency snacks in the classroom in the event we cannot use something a parent has brought in for the snack. We ask our parent helpers to bring healthy snacks and beverages for their parent helper day. We will also provide you with a monthly schedule and a suggestion booklet for ideas and items you can bring.

Can I send my own snack for my child?

The LCDS program is licensed for the program plan registered with Alberta Child and Youth Care which indicates a group snack setting. The only individual snacks we will accept are for children with multiple severe allergies or specific health requirements and we will ask the parent to try and match the daily designated snack. Snack is served in a group setting in our classroom and we ask parents to adhere to our schedule and to bring healthy choices for the snack. Offering snack in this manner allows the staff to monitor allergies, talk about healthy choices and allows the children to try a variety of different foods they may not try at home.

How does the school define "toilet trained"?

All children must be daytime toilet trained before starting the program. This means they must be able to indicate their need to use the washroom, maneuver their own clothing, get on and off of the toilet, wipe themselves, and flush the toilet. They must be independent in the washroom cubicle. This is for your child's safety as well as the staff members. The children have access to two washrooms inside the classroom whenever needed throughout the class.

A supervised washroom break is scheduled halfway through the class where all of the children have the opportunity to use the main washroom independently in the separate cubicles. We understand the children are little and accidents do happen; if a child is experiencing recurring accidents, parents will be asked to keep the child at home until they are demonstrating that they are toilet trained and they can indicate their need to go. We do not accept children in "Pull-Ups". We have spare emergency clothes on hand in the event a child has an occasional accident.

What if my child has a severe developmental delay and they are not toilet trained?

Every child's individual situation is considered at the time of registration; registration may be available if appropriate circumstances can be arranged in order to accommodate the needs of the child and the school.

***Does LCDS offer ECS (Early Childhood Services)?***

LCDS is not a designated ECS site, but we do offer instruction for children who may have mild or moderate to severe speech & language delays. Registration spots may be limited due to available space, available resources and the number of children already enrolled in the program. Families should speak with the school office to discuss the needs of the child before registering.

Does LCDS offer speech & language services?

LCDS does offer speech & language services. Speech & language screening of all registered LCDS children is completed during the first few weeks of September. If there are any concerns arising from the screening we will inform the parents or guardian of our concerns and request permission to do a full assessment of the child's speech & language. If the child qualifies for Early Childhood Services, the school will apply for ECS funding. Once approved by Alberta Education, an Individual Program Plan will be developed for the child. Families are still required to pay a monthly fee if their child qualifies for funding. The funding does not provide for non-instructional components of the program. Families should speak with the school office if they have any questions regarding funding.

If your child has been to Alberta Health Services or another program and has received a diagnosis, reports or assessments, we will require a copy of these before we can accept their registration. The school must ensure appropriate resources are accessible and available (such as qualified staff, facility equipment, etc.) in order to accommodate the needs of the child before accepting the child's registration.

How many registration spots are available for severe developmental delays?

The number of registration spots available for severe developmental delays (Program Unit Funding (PUF)) is limited. One registration spot is available in the AM class and one in the PM class. The school must ensure appropriate resources are available (such as qualified staff, facility equipment, etc.) in order to accommodate the needs of the child before accepting the child's registration. Registration spots currently held by registered families do not become available until the end of May providing the registered families are moving onto a new school. New families wishing to register their child in the program may be asked to come for a trial class in April or May and submit their child's assessments along with a registration form. They will be contacted at the beginning of June to let them know if we have an open spot for their child. LCDS may not always be able to accommodate specific developmental needs.

Does LCDS work with other programs such as GRIT, Center for Autism, etc.?

Yes, LCDS will work with other programs to incorporate a child into a community preschool or kindergarten setting. We are limited in space for these types of placements; Families should speak with the school office to discuss their individual requirements before registering. LCDS may not always be able to accommodate specific developmental needs.

COVID Requirements:***Will my child have to wear a mask?***

Children at this age are not required to wear a mask while at school; families are strongly encouraged to have their child wear a mask at school as it protects them from contracting and spreading illness. All adults including staff members must wear a mask when inside the building and working with children.

How often is the classroom cleaned?

The classroom is cleaned twice daily with the recommended cleaning requirements from Alberta Health Services. The Gateway Alliance Church may use the classroom on Sunday for their children's ministry, they bring in their own toys and materials and the classroom is cleaned and disinfected after their use.

How is snack provided?

COVID regulations prevent us from having parent volunteers inside the classroom during class, but parents are still asked to provide the daily snack for the class once per month according to the prepared schedule. One staff member prepares the snack for the class and it is served on individual plates to the children. At snack time the children are socially distanced around the tables for eating.

What protocols do you have for entry to the building?

Upon arrival you will be asked to sanitize your hands and your child's hands before entering the main area of the building. Parents must fill out the COVID Health Questionnaire each day their child attends. The staff will take your child's temperature; a temperature of 37.5 degrees will not be allowed to stay.



How do you maintain social distancing?

Social distancing is maintained as best as possible at this age group. Centers have been created to limit the number of children at each center with consideration towards how the COVID virus is transmitted (i.e. no shared sensory items only individual touching, items that are easy to clean). For pick up and drop off we ask parents to maintain a 2 meter distance from other parents while waiting to enter the classroom hallway for drop off and pick up. We ask families to limit the number of people dropping off and picking up to one adult.

What is the protocol for illness?

All staff members are required to stay home if they are experiencing any signs of illness and to follow all Alberta Health guidelines. All families are asked to keep their children at home if they are showing any signs of illness and follow all Alberta Health guidelines. If a child or staff member develops any symptoms of illness while at school, they will be sent home and asked to see their doctor and get tested for COVID.

Which washroom will the children use?

We have two single washrooms inside the classroom for the children to use as they need. They are disinfected after each class. The main public washroom will be used for the group washroom break; only a few stalls are used for the group and they are disinfected before and after the children's use.

What if there is a positive COVID case?

If there is a positive COVID case reported to the school office by AHS or a parent, we will follow the guidelines set out by Alberta Health Services and Childcare Licensing. The actions taken are dependent upon the individual case and timeline for when they showed symptoms and when they were tested. If the program is affected by the case, the school will inform the membership of the incident and the requirements everyone must follow. If Alberta Health services recommend isolation or quarantine, the school will shut down for 14 days. If this occurs, fees will not be adjusted; all members knowingly assume the risk of contracting the virus in a public environment.

Do I still need to volunteer during COVID?

Yes, all parents still need to participate in their registration commitments. The daily parent helper requirement will only involve providing the scheduled snack ingredients for the classroom on your scheduled day until further notice. Bingo and Casino commitments may be affected by lock down restrictions, parents will be notified but the commitment is still required. Extra cleaning duties, take home project preparation kits, laundry and other volunteer aspects will be needed more than ever during COVID to ensure staff are not overwhelmed by the added requirements for operating during COVID and to ensure financial stability during COVID. We thank you for your involvement as it helps maintain the health and safety of our children and staff members.

****If your question was not answered in the information provided, please feel free to call or email the school office for more clarification.**