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# BROOKS PRESCHOOL



## FAMILY HANDBOOK

Providing Quality Play Experiences  
in our Community for Over 40 Years



327B - 3rd Street West, Brooks, AB T1R 0E7

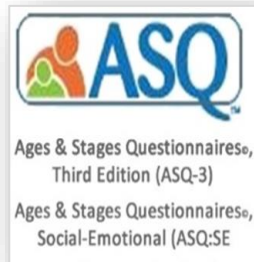
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# WELCOME TO YOU ALL!

- This handbook is designed to answer some questions you may have regarding the Brooks Preschool.
- All families are required to read the Family Handbook before registering your child.
- Families will abide by the policies of Brooks Preschool.
- A family orientation is given in September or throughout the year when your child is registered.
- Tours are available for families and community members; please contact us to book a time.
- Families will be notified of additional Preschool Program Policies and Early Learning and Child Care Regulations.



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## **Mission Statement**

The Brooks Preschool provides a quality play-based educational experience for early childhood learners in our community.

## **Philosophy**

We believe that through meaningful play children build a solid foundation for later learning. Our play-based child centered program reflects the integration of early literacy and language development, numeracy, discovery, social and emotional relationships, music, drama, art, and physical fitness areas for the total development of the child.

We make every effort to provide an environment that reflects the lives and cultural heritages of our children and educators. We celebrate seasonal and cultural festivals; we include natural and loose parts in play and encourage the children to use their imaginations.

An essential part of the preschool is that families become actively involved in the operation and evaluation of the preschool through their participation. This includes assisting the teachers in the class or by serving on the Board of Directors.

It is the responsibility as Early Childhood Educators to provide each child with a positive, nurturing, safe and secure environment. Of the utmost importance to us is the safety and wellbeing of the children. We support this through ensuring staff provide a Criminal Record Check, Child Social Services Check and are trained in First Aid/CPR and the carrying out of fire and lockdown drills.

We believe the primary function of a good preschool is to help each child achieve and enjoy the fullest development possible for them. An experience in preschool goes a long way towards serving as a readiness bridge to school.

## **Our Program**

- The Brooks Preschool began because of the interest and concern of a group of parents. A committee of parents now forms the executive and meets every month. A list of their names and telephone numbers will be sent home with you in the first newsletter.
- Our program follows FLIGHT the Alberta Early Learning and Childcare Curriculum Framework. It is well-rounded and invites children to use their sense of curiosity by learning

through PLAY, PARTICIPATION, and POSSIBILITIES.

- Will remain diligent in keeping apprised of current trends in the Early Childhood Education Field.
- We provide a range of developmentally appropriate activities and materials set out for the children through play generated by the children's interests.
- We provide a balance of active and quiet activities, individual, small, and large group activities, child-initiated and teacher-selected activities, and indoor and outdoor play activities. Learning centers are provided that allow children to explore, experiment, discover, create, and ask questions.
- Different areas in the classroom are set up to promote language and early literacy skills, numeracy, discovery, physical, social, emotional, and cultural development.
- Important social skills and character building such as trust, sharing, caring, fairness, independence, responsibility, respect for self and others are encouraged, helping to create a positive self-image for your child.
- Our main centers will be Housekeeping, Drama, Blocks, Sand & Water, Reading, Paint Easel, Art Tables. Our centers are changed weekly/monthly according to the development and interests of the children, seasonal and cultural events.
- ***DID YOU KNOW?*** Brooks Preschool and Newell Integrated Child Care have been providing excellent early learning services in our community for over 40 years. We are in the same building and have the capability of escorting children to and from both agencies.

## Our Staff

- Licensed and qualified early childhood educators with certification granted by Alberta Child and Family Services.
- Certified in FLIGHT Alberta's Early Learning and Care Curriculum Framework
- ASQ-3 and ASQ SE Ages and Stages Developmental Screening available to your preschool child on request
- Trained in the Get Set for School Program – Learning Without Tears
- Our goal is to support high-quality programming for all children. We do this by creating a comfortable, safe, and stimulating classroom environment which will encourage young children's individual learning and development in all levels: cognitive, social, emotional, and physical.

- Teachers continually stay current of new developments in the Early Childhood Education field by attending Early Learning and Child Care Conferences, Preschool Conventions, as well as workshops and seminars throughout the year.
- To ensure the safety of your child, Teachers and Assistants are requested to submit a Criminal Record Check and Child Social Services Check. Each teacher also possesses a valid and current First Aid Certificate.
- 2017 Teachers win Child Development Professional Awards of Excellence.

## Newsletter

The monthly newsletter helps to keep parents informed about events that will be coming up and changes in policies and regulations. Newsletters are sent out the last week of each month. Through email or a hard copy may be requested. You will also find the newsletter on our website, [www.brookspreschool.com](http://www.brookspreschool.com), at the beginning of each month.

## Hours of Operation

Doors open at 8:15, if you require earlier drop off, please talk to the Administrator

- Monday 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM
- Tuesday 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM
- Wednesday 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM
- Thursday 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM
- Friday 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM



## Daily Schedule

*This schedule is flexible to the needs of the children*

- 8:15 am Doors Open (Sign In & Name Tags)  
Wash hands/Free Play/Art/Discovery
- 10:15 am Cleanup  
Story/Transition Activity/Wash hands
- 10:35 am Snack & Clean up
- 11:10 am Gathering Time (show & tell, songs & games)
- 11:30 am Gross Motor/Music & Movement  
(Outside, Weather Permitting)
- 12:00 pm Home Time (Sign Out)

## **Cultural Celebrations**

We endeavor to celebrate the cultural holidays and celebrations in a respectful and responsive system for children enrolled in the preschool. Please let us know if you have special celebrations or traditions that you wish to share with us to share with the children in the preschool.

## **Inclusivity and Diversity**

We aim to provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued, include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity, provide positive non-stereotyping understanding about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities, and promoting equality in our program.

## **Routine Outings**

Children will have the opportunity to take part in Routine and Special occasion activities in the building and outings. These activities are such as walks around the neighborhood or spring and fall visits to community parks, food bank and pottery guild visits. Etc. If you have any physical or medical concerns that might interfere with his/her participation in the activity, then please notify Brooks Preschool. Permission for off-site routine outings must be signed.

## **Field Trips**

Permission slips for Field Trips/Off-Site Activities outside of routine outings must be issued to the parents two weeks before the date of the Field Trip, including the transportation and supervision arrangements concerning the activity. Parents must consent in writing for their child's participation in the field trip/off-site activity.

## **School Closures**

The Preschool will remain open as scheduled unless there are blizzard conditions and subsequent road closures or the temperature in the school falls below 15 °C. The Preschool will also be closed if outside temperatures reach -35°C or colder, excluding wind chill. School closures will be reported on the local radio stations.



## **Understanding a Child's Behaviour**

It is of the utmost importance that our parents feel valued in the decisions made regarding their children while in preschool. At times staff will ask for you to share information about your child or to possibly come and observe should they have concerns about their development or changes in behavior. Our goal is to build a strong relationship that will nurture a child, by providing strategies, resources, and referrals where needed. The focus is on how to best support your child both in the preschool environment and at home. Parents are involved every step of the way and are essential to the success of the team. Staff will support families in implementing strategies to assist the child with developmental concerns at the direction of the professional to whom the family has been referred.

## **Child Guidance**

Concerning a child in the program, Brooks Preschool will not:

- a) inflict or cause to be inflicted any form of physical punishment, verbal or physical degradation or emotional deprivation
- b) deny or threaten to deny any necessity
- c) use or permit the use of any form of physical restraint, confinement, or isolation

Any child guidance action taken is reasonable in the circumstances. We believe that children should not be humiliated in front of their peers. Should a child be disruptive to the other children, he, or she will be redirected to another activity or redirected from the others and supervised by a staff in eye view, until the problem is resolved. Should the problem persist, the parents will be contacted, and it will be discussed with them if further measures are necessary. The child guidance policy will be discussed with parents at orientation. Staff will review the discipline policy during the September staff meeting and it will be introduced to the children during the first regular classes.

## **Registration**

Brooks Preschool is open to all children between the ages of three and Kindergarten age. Children must be three years old by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year. They are also required to be close to being toilet trained and able to communicate their needs. Exceptions are made for children with special needs. Example: Developmental needs, medical and early English language learners.

There may be a maximum of 12-24 children per class, depending on registration. The Brooks Preschool may only run full classes and reserves the right to make changes to the schedule if needed. We accept children throughout the year when a vacancy occurs. If there is no vacancy, we will establish a waiting list and you will be notified as soon as we can accept your child. The earliest applications will be given priority.

Please notify the Preschool if there is any change to the information on your registration form. The Brooks Preschool is required to have two full names and phone numbers of local people to contact in case of an emergency. Brooks Preschool will not accept liability for negative outcomes because of incorrect or misinformation on registration forms or changes to personal information not provided to the Preschool. There will be a \$20.00 administration fee if you wish to change classes after registration.

## **Preschool Fees and Schedule**

The following payment options are available on information and registration evenings:

- ✓ E-transfer
- ✓ Personal Cheque (s) - NSF Fee is \$40.00
- ✓ Debit Card
- ✓ VISA/MasterCard
- ✓ Cash

### **Class Fees**

- Annual Registration Fee and 1 month fee due on registration date
- Nine monthly payments starting September 1 - May 1
- Please date post-dated cheques for the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.
- All cheques must be received upon registration.
- \$10.00 late fees apply to missed monthly payments.
- \$5.00 charge for e-transfers sent to the wrong email.
- Annual Registration Fee is non-refundable, \$40.00 per family

## **Parent Orientation**

Parents will be given an orientation in September or before their child starts regular class in the program. This will involve a tour of the facility, information policies, and procedures will be reviewed.

## Separation Anxiety

Our Preschool supports you and your child as your child works through feelings of anxiety over separation. Our staff is sensitive to the emotions and anxiety when a child starts a new program and is available to help make this new situation manageable for you and your child. Participation by parents and staff should promote a relatively smooth adjustment. The way you feel about your child going to preschool for the first time significantly affects your child's adjustment. The following suggestions may help:

- think and speak positively to your child about starting preschool, as your feelings will affect how your child adjusts to the separation,
- help your child deal with his or her feelings,
- assure your child that you will return,
- make sure you inform your child of your arrival and departure (attempts to slip away unseen will increase your child's level of anxiety on a subsequent occasion).

## What to Bring for Each Class

1. inside shoes or hard soled slippers, labelled
2. change of clothes in plastic bag
3. labelled backpack
4. lunch bag
5. water bottle



## Clothing

Parents are asked to mark all outdoor clothing and footwear with their child's name or symbol which is recognizable to the child, as the children are encouraged to dress themselves as much as possible. Please DO NOT dress your child in their "Sunday best" because paints are used extensively in the Preschool, and they sometimes stain clothing. Please send shoes or hard-soled slippers with your child.

## Nutrition / Snack

The Brooks Preschool encourages healthy eating habits by ensuring there are nutritious snacks chosen/provided each class. Snack time is approximately 10:45 a.m. Each child will bring their own snack and drink, please label lunch kit with their name. Children must be seated while eating and

seated or standing still while drinking. Parents are asked to ONLY provide nutritious snacks and drinks that follow preschool guidelines. For more snack ideas, you can find a Canada Health Guide at <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/> Choose from at least two food groups for your snack choices. In the case a child's snack does not comply with the preschool's guidelines, your child's snack will be sent home with a reminder note of what snacks are appropriate for snack time and they will be given a replacement snack provided by the preschool. A reimbursement fee may apply.

**Guidelines are:**

- Brooks Preschool is a nut-aware school; children's snacks must be nut-free.
- Drinks - water or 100% fruit juice - no kool-aid or powder juice
- Whole grapes – must be sliced lengthwise
- Hot dogs - must be sliced lengthwise
- Hard vegetables/fruit - shred or chop
- Cherry, peaches, plum – must remove pits
- Nuts or seeds - NO NUT BUTTERS / SPREADS – such as peanut butter or Nutella
- No hard candies, caramels/toffee, chewing gum or popcorn, gumdrops, jellybeans
- Cakes, cupcakes, rice crispy cake, ice cream – no sweets
- Please do not serve snacks made with toothpicks or skewers
- On special occasions eg: Christmas Parties, End of Year Graduations treats, and desserts can be served under the direction of Brooks Preschool.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

When you arrive, we advise the following routine:

- sign your child in
- help your child with their belongings in the cubby area
- help your child wash their hands before they begin to play to help prevent the spread of infection and disease

Provincial regulations state that children can only be released to adults who are authorized in writing on the registration form by the child's legal guardian. Upon registration parents are asked to submit a list of names of persons authorized to collect their child. Any changes to the list must then be made known to the preschool staff and your child's records updated.

- Parents must come into the building to pick up their children.
- Children will not be released to anyone other than their parents unless previous arrangements have been made in writing. Staff may ask for identification before releasing the child.
- If you do not pick up your child by the 12:15 a.m. you will be charged \$5.00, and for every 15 minutes after that accordingly.

Children must be signed in on arrival and out at dismissal. The school does not accept responsibility for children outside of the hours of operation stated above.

If your child will be attending The Newell Integrated Childcare Centre. Convenient arrangements are made for childcare staff to bring your child to preschool. Brooks Preschool staff must be listed as Authorized Release as they will be returning your child to the Childcare Center after class.

## **Withdrawals and Refunds**

Refunds will be given from the date of withdrawal before (December 31) if:

- a) Notice is given 30 days before to the first of the month of withdrawal special circumstances to be determined on an individual basis by the Board. If the above circumstances are not met, the refund will be given from the first-month following withdrawal. EXAMPLE: To withdraw for November 1, you must give notice to the registrar before October 1. If you give notice on October 15, your withdrawal date will be December 1.
- b) No refunds are given after December 31.
- c) No child shall be able to take another's place, or enrollment sold off.
- d) There will be a \$20.00 administration fee if you wish to change classes after registration.

## **Medication**

In the case of a chronic health condition, medication, or health care in first aid practice will only be given (by The Brooks Preschool Staff certified in first aid), in emergency life threatening circumstances and upon the written request of a physician and written consent of the parent has been obtained.

A Medical Record must be completed, and medications must be given to the teacher. No medication should be left in their backpack. Medication must be in its original labelled container, with the name of the medication, name of the physician, date of issue and be administered according to label directions and then recorded on the Medication Form. Only medication prescribed to the student will be given.

## **Health Care**

In case of an accident/incident or serious illness to a child, the classroom teacher in charge shall ensure: The parent/guardian will be contacted immediately the same day, by telephone as well as in writing of the accident/incident when the child is picked up. The written consent of the child's parent to provide or allow for the provision of health care has been obtained. The child's parent must give consent for Brooks Preschool Teachers and Teacher Assistants certified in first aid known as the health care provider, to administer health care to my child in First Aid, as required on assessment. When a child becomes sick, a primary staff member will directly supervise the child and keep them comfortable and away from the other children until they can be picked up.

It is also your benefit and for the protection of your child that he or she has their immunizations up to date, but it is not required to be enrolled in the Preschool. There will be children attending preschool who are not immunized. Please check with the public health nurse to determine the vaccinations your child should have. If your child contracts a communicable disease, please advise the school and keep the child at home. Please sign waiver if choosing not to immunize your child.

The school adheres to the regulations of the Department of Health and Fire Department. They ensure that we have the proper ventilation, heating, and space for a healthy environment for the children.

## **Potential Health Risk**

When a staff member knows or has reason to believe that a child is showing signs or symptoms of vomiting, having a fever, diarrhea or a new or unexplained rash or cough. If a child requires greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program or having or displaying any other illness or symptom the staff member knows or believes may indicate that the child poses a health risk to persons on the program premises. The child's parent(s) will be contacted to remove the child from the school immediately. The child may return to Preschool if a parent provides written notice from a physician or when a parent can report to the staff

that the child has been symptom-free for 24 hours and no longer poses a health risk to persons at the preschool. Outbreaks will be recorded on an Illness Incident Log Sheet by the staff and will be reported to the local Alberta Health Services public health office.

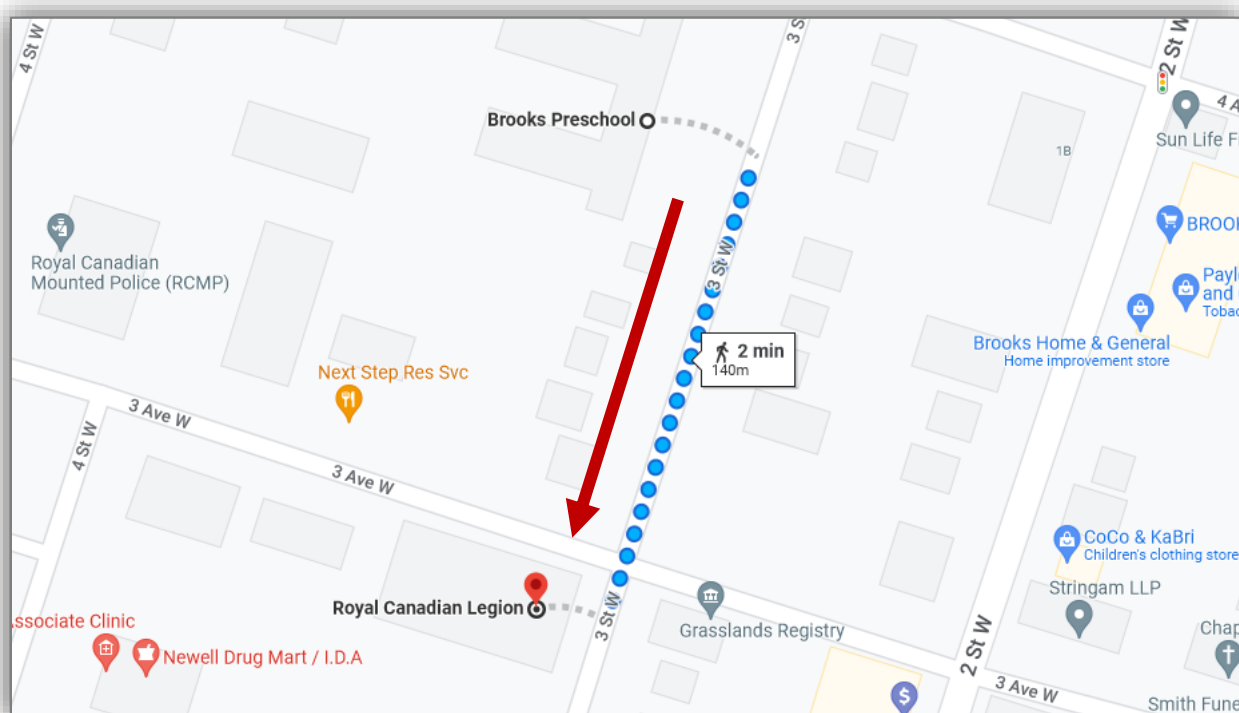
## Fire Regulations, Licensing and Inspections

Monthly Fire Drills are practiced. Regulations require that footwear be always worn. To keep parents informed regarding all licensing visits, fire and environmental inspections, all reports will be posted on the bulletin board by the sign-in area. The monthly minutes of the operational board meetings will also be kept there for your viewing.

## Emergency Evacuation Procedures

The children and parents will be introduced to the procedures during orientation and a letter will be sent home.

1. Children line up quickly and quietly in single file at Emergency Exit.
2. Teacher and Teacher's Aide count children.
3. The teacher picks up the school register located near Emergency Exit; the register contains the record of that day's attendance and Portable Records for each child.
4. Children escorted to emergency location; Royal Canadian Legion E.I.D. No. 63, 235 - 3rd Street West, Brooks, by school staff and volunteer parents.
5. Parents contacted to pick up children from there.



## **Emergency Lockdown Procedures**

The teacher or teacher assistant will initiate, manage, and conclude the lockdown procedure.

A lockdown will be called when a situation arises that calls for isolation rather than the evacuation of staff and students from an identified threat. For example, an aggressive or violent intruder, hostage incident, armed robbery, severe storms. The children and parents will be introduced to the procedures during orientation and a letter will be sent home. A separate sheet will be posted for each class to monitor 3-4 yearly shutdown drills.

The lockdown will be announced by stating "Mr. Lockdown is here". Children will be signaled with a whistle, and procedures will be followed according to preschool policies.

## **Supervision Policy**

The Brooks Preschool primary staff has a duty of care to always provide adequate supervision of all children in attendance, both indoors and outdoors. Where there are 7 or more children present at our program, there will be a minimum of two adult staff members-one who is a primary staff member on duty. Staff will actively participate in or guide children in activities, while being attentive, alert, and watchful of each child, as well as engaging with the entire group of children. Supervision will be adjusted to the specifics of the environment and the individual development needs of the children. *Parents will be informed of the program's supervision policies and practices during orientation.*

Each class employs one teacher and may have one teacher's aide. In addition to parent helpers depending upon the size of the class. There may also be therapists, aides, speech pathologists, etc. who would not be required to provide the preschool with a criminal record check. They are not categorized as staff or volunteers.

## **Special Helper Days**

This may be your child's first experience at school, and it is a good time for you to become involved with the school if you can. When you come in for your Helper Day you will be able to observe your child at play and a chance to get to know the teachers. Single Class-Approx. 3-4 times throughout the school year, Double Class-Approx. 5-6 times throughout the school year. Should the parent be unable to attend, the Preschool welcomes alternates such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. Criminal Record Checks must be provided. Children are proud to have their parent/alternate attend school. On this day, your child may bring something for show and tell.



For best practices, we ask that one helper is in each daily class. *Please call the preschool when registering your child if you cannot be a parent helper due to your work schedule or other reasons.* No younger siblings of children are to be brought with you when it is your turn to help. Our front door is locked during school hours to keep our children safe. Please ring the doorbell if you need entrance.

## Special Helper Responsibilities

- These are guidelines.
- Teachers are available to assist & direct parents.
- Please arrive by 8:45 a.m. and plan to stay 5 minutes after final cleanup.

### Centers Free Play

- Interact with children and help where needed.
- Assist in reinforcing classroom routine, rules, and expectations.
- Assist individual children only when necessary since we are trying to develop their sense of responsibility.

### Center Clean Ups

- Sweep up any loose sand around sand table, wipe up spills around water table.
- Spray and wipe tables after art (with bleach solution provided).
- Help children clean up play/art areas/paint easel etc.

### Snack Time

- Assist children with their snacks and join in at the table.
- Help children wait to give thank-yous before starting to eat (sing songs)
- After snack sweep snack room & wipe all tables/chairs with bleach solution
- Check to ensure everything is put away



## **Criminal Record Checks**

For the safety of all students in our preschool every parent helper/volunteer at Brooks Preschool is required to submit a Criminal Record Check before working with the students. Dated not earlier than 6 months before the date of commencement with the preschool. Please take or email the letter found on the website under registration information or to the R.C.M.P Detachment to obtain your Criminal Record Check.

You can call the Brooks RCMP at 403-794-4400 and they will direct you. There is no cost to have this check done as long the letter is received with the form provided in the Enrollment Forms. Once you have obtained your criminal record check you can submit it to the preschool via email or bring the Criminal Record Check into the preschool when you volunteer.

## **Board of Directors Positions**

All parents are encouraged to attend the Annual General Meeting to elect the Preschool Board which is held every June. Any person appointed to the Brooks Preschool Society Board may not be a relative of any paid employee of the Brooks Preschool.

### **CHAIR – Director, voting**

- Preside at all board and parent meetings. Prepare agendas for meetings.
- Has cheque signing authority.
- Sign contracts head the committees for the hiring of personnel, review by-laws and prepare special resolutions.
- Member of the budget committee.
- Keep all board members informed.

### **VICE CHAIR – Director, voting**

- Preside at any meeting where the president is absent.
- Handle documentation for renewal of the Preschool license.
- Deal with the insurance agent in any matters of pertaining to the renewal of our insurance policies.
- Review and negotiate the contract with the City of Brooks concerning subletting of the Preschool premises.

**TEACHER LIASON – Director, voting**

- Meet with teachers regularly during teachers prep time and brings any concern or question to the board meetings.
- Reviews the teacher’s monthly plans and helps arrange special occasions.

**SECRETARY – Director, voting**

- Record minutes of all meetings.
- Notify members of various meetings and information.
- Responsible for Scholastic Book Orders.

**TREASURER – Director, voting**

- Responsible for all monies paid or donated to the Society; ensure monthly deposits are made, pay the bills; prepare monthly payroll; NSF collections.
- Present the monthly bank statements at the monthly board meetings.
- Member of the budget committee.

**ASSISTANT TREASURER – Assistant Director, voting**

- Helps Treasurer with monthly deposits and yearly budgets.
- Communicates with the teachers throughout the year on any financial dealings.

**REGISTRAR – Director, voting**

- Revises registration and information sheets with the Teacher Administrator.
- Advertises and organizes registration night. Ensures all registration forms are filled out properly, and gets all payment organized and to the Treasurer.
- Takes new registration throughout the year. Arranges volunteers to assist with registration.

**ASSISTANT REGISTRAR – Assistant Director, voting**

- Helps Registrar with set up of registration nights.
- Helps take new registrations and informs the teachers and necessary board members of class changes as needed.

### **SUPPLIES – Assistant Director, non-voting**

- Sets up running inventory with teachers and does a general overview of inventory in April. Checks with teachers monthly for needed supplies and gets supplies for special events, including snack replacement items.
- Thank You cards.

### **PARENT RESOURCES – Director, voting**

- Arrange fundraisers/events throughout the year.
- Help with Casino.

### **NEWSLETTER – Assistant Director, non-voting**

- Compile and make copies of monthly newsletter regarding events, information etc. concerning the Brooks Preschool.
- Send out monthly reminders of volunteer parent days.
- Provide newsletter to teachers for updating website.
- Updates website with board information as needed.

### **MEMBER AT LARGE – Assistant Director, non-voting**

- Assist Parent Resources with Fundraising.
- Assist the teacher with small tasks as requested.

**ROOM REPS** - One room rep is required for each class. These people are responsible for phoning or emailing the parents in their class in the event of any important changes (i.e. school closure due to snowstorm). They may also help Teacher Liaison with a monthly parent helper roster for their class.

**MAINTENANCE & REPAIR** - Are you handy with a hammer, nails, screws, or a glue gun? Then we could use your help in repairing toys and equipment.