



Westlock Elementary School Early Learning Program

SPICE

Social
Physical
Intellectual
Creative
Emotional

MIGHTY LEARNERS



Family Handbook 2017-2018

Just Playing

When I'm building in the block area,
Please don't say I'm "just playing."
For you see, I'm learning as I play,
About balances and shapes.
Who knows, I may be an architect someday.

When I'm getting all dressed up,
Setting the table, caring for the babies,
Don't get the idea I'm "just playing."
For you see, I'm learning as I play;
I may be a mother or father someday.

When you see me up to my elbows in paint
Or standing at an easel,
Or molding and shaping clay,
Please don't let me hear you say, "He is just playing."
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm expressing myself and being creative.
I may be an artist or an inventor someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair
"Reading" to an imaginary audience,
Please don't laugh and think I'm "just playing."
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a teacher someday.

When you see me combing the bushes for bugs,
Or packing my pockets with choice things I find,
Don't pass it off as "just play."
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I may be a scientist someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle
Or some "plaything" at my school,
Please don't feel the time is wasted in 'play.'
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to solve problems and concentrate.
I may be in business someday.

When you see me cooking or tasting foods,
Please don't think that because I enjoy it,
It is 'just play.'
I'm learning to follow direction and see differences.
I may be a cook someday.

When you see me learning to skip, hop,
Run and move my body,
Please don't say I'm "just playing."
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning how my body works.
I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.

When you ask me what I've done at school today,
And I say, "I just played",
Please don't misunderstand me.
For you see, I'm learning as I play.
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in my work.
I'm preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I am a child and my work is play.

- Anita Wadley

Pembina Hills Public Schools

Westlock Elementary School

SPICE Program

Welcome to: **SPICE**

Social
Physical
Intellectual
Creative
Emotional

Where: SPICE classroom is housed in Westlock Elementary School.

When: The program will run **Monday through Thursday**. The morning class is from 8:30-11:30 and the afternoon program is from 12:20-3:20. Classes will begin on the week of September 5, 2017 and will end on June 7, 2018.

Please take some time to review our SPICE handbook. We hope that this will help your family's transition to our school a little easier. We are so excited to have the opportunity to work with your child and we would like to take this time to welcome you to our school.

The following are some information items about the SPICE program:

Educational Team for SPICE:

Early Learning Teacher: Gloria Victoor
Program Assistants: Gwen Stewart
Cheryl Hunter
Maggie McGean
Laura Parenteau

Communication Assistant: Darlene Esch
Speech Language Pathologist: Catherine Kraft-Urkow
Occupational Therapist: Coral King-Hunter
Behavior Specialist: Stephen Gokiart

The SPICE program will be operating Monday through Thursdays. **On Early dismissal afternoons there will be NO SPICE.**

Monday
SPICE

Tuesday
SPICE

Wednesday
SPICE
**NO afternoon Class
on Early Dismissal
Days

Thursday
SPICE

Friday
-staff program
planning &
Preparation(scheduled
days)

Philosophy of the SPICE Program:

SPICE is a play-based, inclusive preschool program for children ages 3-5 years of age. The program is comprised of typically developing children and children with a variety of special needs. SPICE is overseen by Early Learning Teacher, *Gloria Victoor* and run on a daily basis by program assistants. The program assistants are wonderful qualified staff with growing experience and training in working with preschool aged children. This enables SPICE to provide a quality program striving to meet the individual needs of children.

The integrated model provides an enriching experience for all the children to learn through structured play activities and experiences. Plus, the typically developing children are wonderful peer models of language and play skills. All the children gain valuable preschool readiness skills, experience and an appreciation of individual needs and differences.

Our classroom is guided by an early learning and child care curriculum framework for Alberta called Play, Participation and Possibilities. Children's play is central to this curriculum framework as an active, exploratory, creative, expressive process, deeply embedded in children's everyday experiences and through which children participate in, learn about and actively make sense of the world.

Daily Activities:

PLAY is our main language in the SPICE classroom. Research shows that PLAY is the most effective way for children to learn the early skills necessary to be successful in their school experiences. Not free-for-all play, but intentional play and learning through play activities that will be structured and offered for the children to explore, inquire, and create and learn through active engagement.

Daily activities are designed to increase children's abilities in a wide variety of developmental areas. The daily program includes some of the following activities:

- Music and Movement activities
- Structured Group times
- Centers
- Creative art times
- Snack
- Indoor and outdoor play times
- Individual and group speech language and OT activities

Through these daily activities the children learn and develop at their own individual rates.



Concepts and Skills Developed Through SPICE:

- **Self-help skills** (ie: dressing, eating, toileting)
**when dropping off or picking up your child, we would encourage you to allow them to enter the classroom on their own. This will enable them to develop their independence. (ie/coat off/on, backpack zipper/lunch-kit in and out, shoes on and off) This will enable them to develop their independence over the course of the year. Please send VELCRO shoes.
- **Fine motor development** (ie: beading, coloring, scissor skills, pre-printing skills)
- **Gross motor development** (ie: running, jumping, coordination skills)
- **Speech language development**
**ie: receptive language (what your child understands through listening)
**ie: expressive language (what your child says)
**ie: phonological skills (how your child makes speech sounds)
- **Social skills** (ie: sharing, turn-taking, playing)
- **Participation and ability to follow routines** (ie: joining in class activities)
- **Literacy & Numeracy skills** (ie: exposure to early numeracy & literacy skills through music, literature and classroom activities.)

Family Oriented Programming (FOP)

Regularly scheduled Family Oriented Programs will be planned in the fall and further information will be forthcoming at that time. Some FOPs may also be scheduled with individual families in certain skill development areas for some of the children in SPICE. These visits provide a great opportunity for families to gain strategies to help their children at home. One main area of development will be the focus of each family visit.

**Funding for SPICE:

Program Unit Funding (PUF) and Mild/Moderate (M/M) funding is available through Alberta Education for children who meet specific qualifications.

Typically developing children are required to pay fees. Number of days of your child's program will be determined by the Early Learning School Team.

Once invoiced payments can be made in one or two lump sums or monthly. Prompt payment is required for continuation of preschool services If you have any questions, please contact Gloria Victoor at 780-307-0505.

Individual Program Plan (IPP):

An IPP is developed for children with special needs by your child's education team. This is a plan outlining your child's history, assessment information, relevant medical information and their strengths and areas of need. Long-term goals are identified with strategies to help reach these goals. A team meeting of school staff and parents (your child's education team) will be held two or three times each school year to develop and review the IPP. **Parents/ guardians MUST commit to attending if your child is receiving funding (MM or PUF).**

Program Closures

1. When **PHPS schools are closed** - the **SPICE program is closed**.
2. When buses **are not** running and schools are open, **SPICE will be open**.

Check the PHPS website for bus and/or school cancellations.

On very cold days' parents are urged to use their best judgment concerning sending/bringing their young child to school.

Medications/Allergies:

If your child needs to take any medication at school, a signed permission form is required for each day your child needs medication. Please contact the school for forms and more information. For the safety of your child, please inform us of any allergies or medical needs they have (nut allergies, bee allergies, asthma, etc.).

Illness/Absence:

If your child is sick, please keep them at home to avoid the spread of illness and inform the SPICE team by calling the school. We also request that you call the school/SPICE program or send a note if your child will miss a day.

Parental visits to the classroom:

Parents are welcome to visit the SPICE classroom. Please be respectful of other children and happenings in the classroom. It is important to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of the children. If you have any questions regarding something you see in the classroom, please ask SPICE staff or Early Learning Teacher, Gloria Victoor.

We would also ask you to wait outside the classroom at the end of our class as we work to establish a home time routine and encourage students to practice their self-help skills.

There are PHPS guidelines for visitors and volunteers that we will be abiding by in our SPICE classroom

Notes to parents and notes from parents:

Weekly newsletters and calendars will be sent home in your child's backpack therefore, please check their backpack daily. These notes will give you information about activities and upcoming events that will be occurring in our classroom. We ask parents to call the school or send a note to let us know of anything happening at home that may affect your child's day.

Home/School Communication:

Feel free to stop by the classroom at any time. Staff will be happy to speak to you when they have a free moment. Program Assistant staff can answer your questions about day to day events. The Program Coordinator/Teacher is available to speak to you regarding any **questions or concerns** about your child's **program or progress**. Gloria Victoor can be reached at (780) 307-0505.

Dropping off & Picking up:

For the safety of your children, unless picked up by a parent or guardian we ask that you send **written permission** for your child to leave the premises with another adult.

- ♥ Please come through the **MAIN ENTRANCE** at Westlock Elementary School and use the main boot room for outside footwear. The children's footwear space will be labeled when they arrive.
- ♥ Parents, at the end of the day, please wait in the hallway until the children are brought out. This ensures proper closure to our day and an environment to encourage independence in dressing skills and preparing to leave. When the class is over, your child will come out to you.

***Transportation:

Transportation is a parental responsibility to and from the SPICE program.

Transportation may be available for your child, if you are interested please contact your Early Learning Teacher.

What to send to school: *(please label all items clearly with your child's name)*

- ♥ An extra set of clothing *(to be left in the classroom in case of emergencies)*
- ♥ Inside shoes (shoes should be Velcro if possible)
- ♥ Box of large zip-lock bags
- ♥ Pkg. of markers (for class use)
- ♥ 2 large glue sticks (Elmer's glue is preferred)
- ♥ Box of Kleenex (to use in the classroom throughout the year)
- ♥ Backpack
- ♥ Lunch kit with a healthy snack. This might include fruit, vegetables, yogurt, crackers and cheese or nutritious granola bars (not covered in chocolate). **Thank you!!!**
- ♥ ***Please mark shoes, backpacks and lunch kits clearly with your child's name.
- ♥ **Any reports and assessments your child has had. This information is needed to help us develop a program for your child.**

Please Note:

To ensure a quality program, our SPICE staff, regularly observe and document for all SPICE students. This is a tool to encourage and manage positive behaviors as well as to assist us in the planning of developmentally appropriate activities.

Please feel free to contact Gloria Victoor, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's program. We look forward to working with you and your child and being part of their growth and learning.



We are so excited to have the opportunity to work with your child this year!!! Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

The SPICE Team

Thank you for being a part of the SPICE Program. We look forward to a great year!

