

## DALHOUSIE COMMUNITY KINDERGARTEN

### About the Teacher



I am Clair Brown, teacher at Dalhousie Community Kindergarten. I have been teaching at this wonderful program for over ten years, and will be available next year as well.

I returned to University as an adult student when my own children were in Junior High, to earn a second degree: Bachelor of Education (with "distinction"). This training combines with my earlier degree in Sociology, my Grade 10 piano, plus my own experience as a mother, to give me a good background for teaching young children. In addition, I work hard to avoid letting my learning stop or become stagnant. I am on the

executive of a teacher's group that arranges for professional development workshops, and I attend these with the anticipation that they will help me to stay up to date on advances in teaching practice. Other experiences such as the Teacher's Convention and the Provincial Early Childhood Education Council's convention also help to keep me on top of new ideas.

There is nothing like experience to assist a teacher in becoming better, and my experience at Dalhousie has been invaluable toward the development of a teaching style and philosophy that I am proud of. Working in a small Community school means that I have a lot of say in how the class is organized, and there is not much bureaucracy to work around. I also need to try to understand the administrative requirements of Alberta Ed., which keeps me involved politically. But best of all, I have the advice and input from years of involvement by the REAL experts - parents. The program at Dalhousie is the continually changing product of over twenty years of parents and teachers working together directly, and I don't believe there is a better kindergarten class around.

I am told that my manner with the children is very patient, but I also expect a lot of them and can be very firm when it is necessary. I try to set up class activities so that success is attainable for every child, and those who are ready can extend their learning beyond the minimum requirements of Alberta Education. I value creativity and a sense of humour, and try to build opportunities for the development of both in class. Of course, all curriculum requirements are met, but my favourite aspect of young children's learning is early literacy and children's literature.

I believe my most important job as a kindergarten teacher is to help children to keep their natural love of learning, and extend it right through their first classroom situation. If they develop a life-long positive attitude toward discovery, I will consider that I have succeeded.

- Clair Brown