

## PROGRAM STATEMENT

The Children’s Centre provides a high quality, supportive, family-centered program for children in a warm, safe and responsive environment. The curriculum is consistent in approach with “*How Learning Happens?*” Ontario’s pedagogy for the early years. The word pedagogy means “the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support the understanding of learning”. This promotes a shared understanding of what children need and what can be done to help them grow and flourish. The “How Learning Happens?” is organized around four foundational conditions that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children:

<p><b>Belonging</b> refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual’s experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world</p>	<p><b>Well-Being</b> addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self and self-regulation skills</p>
<p><b>Engagement</b> suggest a state of being involved and focused. When children ae able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.</p>	<p><b>Expression</b> or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasing complex communication opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.</p>

### **Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential**

Our approach is to support each child’s learning and development by planning and creating a positive and stimulating learning environment with experiences that foster the children’s own initiated exploration, play and curiosity. This strategy reflects our view of children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential, while providing adult support.

Our planning process includes recording observations, determining interests and planning play opportunities in all developmental areas, which is continuous and available to families.

### **Positive, self-expression, communication and self-regulation**

Our curriculum takes a child initiated, adult supported approach that focuses on play based learning, allowing the child to lead and then focusing on their interest through intentional observation, interaction and engaged communication. When this approach to learning takes place along with staff’s understanding of child development, each child’s learning and individual development is supported and as a result the child’s competence, and potential are maximized.

We know that the children flourish in all areas of development when they are in supportive, caring and responsive relationships with adults whose focus is on health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children. This is the foundation of quality care.

Positive and appropriate behaviour management practices are employed and staff are positive role models.

The Children’s Centre is experienced in providing inclusive programming for all children. When working with children with special needs we work closely with parents, staff and community partners who support children to ensure the appropriate support and resources are in place to ensure optimum success for the child.

### **Health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children**

We know that the early years set the foundation for children’s health and well-being. We understand that the first step in establishing and nurturing health, safety and well-being for children in our programs is through the connections they make with the program staff.

Food is nutritionally balance and we meet all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and government by-laws. Information is posted on our parent boards and the Anaphylactic Policy is available to parents.

Menus are planned following the Canada Food Guide and are both nutritious and appealing to children. Our menus are posted on our Parent Board and on our web site.

The facility, equipment and toys are accessible, clean and safe. Outdoor activities take place in well maintained play areas

### **Parent engagement and communication**

We strongly believe the Child Care is a shared responsibility between parents and staff. The staff work together with the parent to exchange information about the child's language, culture, interests and development so the sum of the child's experiences is greater than which parent or staff alone could provide.

We value parent engagement in the area of both their child's development as well as program development. We provide the following opportunities to ensure that communication and information sharing takes place between parents and educators: daily open communication, evaluation, family events and newsletter. We use the HiMama program to meet the expectation of the four foundations set out in *How Learning Happens?* Belonging, Good Being, Engagement, and expression. These foundations are a vision for all children's future potential and a view of what they should experience each and every day.

Our family events may include but are not limited to the following: A Fall Open House during "The Week of the Child in October for parents to come in and meet with the staff. An annual Christmas Concert and an annual Christmas Dinner (toddler and preschool families). A Mother's and Father's Day events.

Our staff are skilled professionals with caring attitudes, who connect with children to ensure safe environments, plan and extend play, support learning, reflect on success and document the children's play and learning, all of which is the foundation to guiding the staff planning. The documented play and learning's are shared regularly with parents.

Staff encourage each child's developing sense of self and their ability to see themselves as capable communicators, able to manage their emotions and behaviour.

### **Supporting staff in continuous professional learning**

The staff are skilled professionals who have chosen to work with children and families as their career. Through their training, teachers have developed an understanding of the processes involved in facilitating children's growth and development. They possess effective communication and interpersonal skills for relating both to children and adults. They have developed skills in observation, planning and evaluation. In addition, teachers are encouraged to use and develop specialized abilities and pursue interest such as art, music, drama and movement. The teachers are given the major responsibility for providing a stimulating environment which supports the children and families. This environment includes both the physical set-up of the program and the delivery of the activities to the children. In addition, the environment includes the atmosphere which is created by the staff's open, supportive and responsive interaction to the needs of the children and families.

The staff are carefully chosen and specially trained to ensure quality care. We recognize the importance of continuous learning for our staff. To support the value, we place on the importance of continual learning, we provide each child care staff with the opportunity and encouragement to pursue and enhance their professional development.

Our programs create a rich learning environments for children to reach their full potential.

### **Relationships among children, families, staff and community partners**

It is one of our core values to foster collaborative and co-operative relationships among our partners.

The Children's Centre strives to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families. We understand that relationships of trust are the basis for learning and co-operation.

Every child is entitled to be given the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and social skills, to learn to problem solve and to learn about diversity and inclusion.

The skills of conflict resolution are important in lifelong learning. As competent individuals, children are active participants in resolving conflicts. We encourage them to come up with ideas and solutions to problems that arise.

We are committed to working collaboratively with all of our community partners as we work together on the mutual goal of providing the best possible child care services to families.

### **Positive self-expression, communication and self-regulation**

Our inclusive programming leads to children's sense of belonging. Positive learning environments and experiences, focused on active play based learning, encourage children's communication, self expression and self regulation.

We seek to be aware of, foster, encourage, respond to and document the many ways in which children express themselves.

In our inclusive learning environment, we welcome children of all abilities. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion is vital for optimal development and learning.

### **Documenting and reviewing the impact**

We understand that pedagogical documentation is a way for our program staff to learn how children think and learn. The staff make daily observations of the children in the program and use this information to inform their future planning.

Ongoing evaluation is done as teachers monitor the children's interactions, then adapt and adjust the program to meet the needs of the children and adults involved.

The Board of Directors encourage and support the ongoing development of all staff. They have implemented a policy to encourage the staff in the pursuit of knowledge which will contribute to their development within the organization.