



Northlea Community Child Care

PARENT HANDBOOK

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nccc@bellnet.ca

Approved December 19, 2016



Parent Handbook

Child(ren)'s First and Last Name: _____

(If there is more than one child in the family that attends Northlea Community Child Care please indicate both of their names as you only need one acknowledgment of the Parent Guide per family)

We, _____ and _____ have read the Northlea Community Child
(please print your first names)

Care Parent Handbook dated August 2016

We understand and accept the policies and procedures of therein and agree to abide by them.

Print First and Last Name & Signature

Date

Print First and Last Name & Signature

Date

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Welcome

Welcome to Northlea Community Child Care (here-after referred to as NCCC or “the childcare”). NCCC is pleased to share with you the care responsibilities for your child. We hope that your child's stay with us is an enriching and enjoyable experience for your family.

This guide is intended to be an informative resource about NCCC’s operations and policies. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the Director or the President of the NCCC Board of Directors (see appendix A for current Board of Directors and their positions).

NCCC is a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to providing child care services for children 18 months to 12 years of age. It is also a registered charitable organization #1007459-20.

In December of 1993, members of the community were invited to make a decision regarding the operator of a child care space within the newly renovated Northlea Elementary and Middle School (later referred to as “Northlea School”). A parent operated child care was the favoured option, as it was believed that it could best respond to the needs of children and the community in all aspects of the child care operation. NCCC was established in 1994 by a group of parents. The child care is located within Northlea School and works in partnership with the school and the community to provide quality care.

A volunteer Parent Board of Directors governs NCCC. The Director of NCCC acts as an advisor to the Board.

NCCC is licensed by the Ministry of Education and has a purchase of service agreement with Toronto Children’s Services.

NCCC is barrier-free and enjoys access to the gym and library facilities within the school and the outdoor North playground of Northlea School which is CSA-approved. In addition, children have exclusive use of the fenced and gated North playground, directly outside the child care and share the Kinder playground with the School when in our care.

Policy Statement and Values

NCCC is committed to providing a quality, nurturing environment that enhances the growth and learning of each child in partnership with the family, the school, and the community.

Effective partnership between parents and educators is the cornerstone of the program. Our program is directed by the philosophy of learning through play. We believe that each child has a unique pattern of interests and skills. We offer a safe, secure, and stimulating environment which responds to the individual needs of each child and family.

NCCC respects and acknowledges differences in culture, colour, gender, sexual orientation, ability, race, belief, appearance, family composition and socio-economic status.

The program at NCCC is guided by the document "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years 2014" together with the regulations in the "Child Care and Early Years Act 2014" (here-after referred to as CCEYA).

These documents guide program development, pedagogy and practice in the child care setting.

These documents along with the ELECT – Early Learning for Every Child Today strengthens the quality of our programs and assures high quality experiences that will lead to positive outcomes in relation to children's learning, development, health, and well-being.

The ELECT features a continuum of developmental skills and aims to set a foundation for life-long learning success; encourages staff to partner with families; uses play as a means to learning. It focuses on being responsive to children's interests, signals, and needs, requiring ongoing observation and documentation of learning and development in children.

In the Council of Ministry of Education Statement on Play Based Learning (2012) the Council describes the benefits of play as recognized by the scientific community, early learning experts and children and families alike.

NCCC believes in providing:

- a co-operative learning environment and open communication between the child care and the school, based upon partnership among children, families, caregivers and educators and the community

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- quality programs which facilitate childhood growth and development in a safe and secure environment
- highly qualified, committed staff who share in our policy statement and values
- efficient business operation of the child care in order to ensure long term viability

Overview of Programs

NCCC offers various programs for different age groups all of which aim to increase self-esteem and confidence. We value friendship, fun and happiness and promote it in all of our programs. We provide the children choices and freedom within the program.

Our programming is directed by a philosophy that stresses learning through play and is centred on the child's interests. We offer learning experiences to nurture creativity, sensory perception, fine and gross motor skills, social awareness, language skills and intellectual growth. The activities encompass hands-on experience, indoor and outdoor play, excursions, and special events.

TODDLER Program

- Full-time 12-month program which operates from September to August.
- For children aged 18 months – 30 months who reside within the Northlea School catchment area for English.
- Includes a catered lunch and two snacks per day (see "Meals" section for additional information).
- Our curriculum is play based and covers the following areas of development: creative, language & literacy, construction/blocks, cause and effect, numeracy, music/movement, cognitive, sensory, pretend play, science/nature, gross motor, and both child and teacher initiated learning experiences.
- Please see admission process for movement to the next program.

PRESCHOOL Program

- Full-time 12-month program which operates from September to August.
- For children aged 2½ to 4 years (children must be 31 months during the first month registered) who reside within the Northlea School catchment area.
- Includes a catered lunch and two snacks per day (see "Meals" section for additional information).
- The goals are to enhance independence in the child and to promote social interaction and self-help skills. The program offers challenging activities, which contribute to the development of the whole child. NCCC educators provide the

children with activities that promote early literacy and numeracy skills, problem solving, conflict resolution, individual thought and creativity.

FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN AND SCHOOL AGE programs

- Provides before and after-school care and snacks for children in kindergarten to 12 years of age.
- Ten-month programs which operate from September to June for children who reside in the catchment area for Northlea School and are enrolled at Northlea School Full Day and we do not accept children who are bused to or from the school.
- The exact start and end dates align with the Toronto District School Board calendar.
- Includes full-day care and a pizza lunch on Professional Activity (PA) days that fall on a Friday.
- Includes full-day care and snacks on non-school days during March Break and December/January holidays. Parents are responsible for sending a lunch for their child/children from Monday to Thursday and Friday will be pizza lunch provided by NCCC

Programs focus on promoting the development of significant friendships and social skills. Activities encourage the children to develop creativity, acquire new skills and knowledge in a variety of areas. The aim is to increase independence, problem solving and responsibility to prepare the children for the future when they will be old enough to independently manage their hours before and after school.

OPTIONAL SCHOOL AGE LUNCH PROGRAM

- Supervised lunchtime for children in grades one and two.
- Children bring their own lunches from Monday to Thursday. Pizza is provided every Friday.

KINDER / SCHOOL AGE SUMMER CAMP program

- Full-time camp offered week-by-week on a first-come, first-serve basis in July and August.
- Operates from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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- For children 4 to 12 years of age.
- We do not accept children who are bused to and from the camp.
- Camp begins on the first day after the end of the Toronto District School Board school year.
- Registration typically begins by January.
- Includes a workshop, two outings and swimming once a week.
- Includes a catered lunch and two snacks each day.
- Camp is not offered the entire week before Labour Day. NCCC will be closed (all the programs) during this week.

CURRICULUM AREAS:

The children are free to explore activities and NCCC educators will guide them to try a variety of areas and new experiences. The following is a list of curriculum areas for all programs:

DRAMATIC PLAY: Allows children to play cooperatively with their peers through fantasy and build on familiar experiences. For example, the dramatic play area often changes (e.g. house, dinosaur land, campsite) to align with children's interests thus giving them an opportunity to explore new items, ideas and situations.

COGNITIVE LANGUAGE AND MATH ACTIVITIES: Numeracy and literacy concepts are introduced and developed through these experiences. Activities may include counting, sorting, classification, story sequencing, logic games and problem solving. Learning opportunities are developed to be fun and inviting while enhancing the children's skills and abilities.

ART: A variety of different materials and creative mediums are always available for the children to use. Activities are set up to allow freedom of self-expression and creativity. We focus on the process rather than the final product.

SENSORY EXPERIENCES The children are encouraged to explore different mediums to experience the emotional and physical reactions that they have to sensory opportunities. This aids in the recognition of the senses. NCCC educators provide media which is "calming" (e.g. water) or allows children to "vent" (e.g. pound at the playdough).

SCIENCE/DISCOVERY: Discovering how the world works through science. NCCC teachers provide curriculum that explores concepts of biology, chemistry and physics. We explore life cycles, habitats, liquids, solids and gases, motion, electricity and much more through play activities. Cooking activities are also a part of this area.

GROUP TIME: Stories, songs, games, movement and sharing of information are all part of our group time.

SMALL GROUP TIME: More intensive educator-directed activities such as cooking, planting, preparing butterfly larvae, charting, graphing, recording child responses, open conversations and deep thinking are all explored through small group activities.

Staff

NCCC's staff consists of a Director, Assistant Director, Co-Ordinator, Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) and Early Childhood Assistants (ECAs). All RECEs hold a diploma or degree in Early Childhood Education or equivalent, and are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. As a member of the College they are entitled to practice the profession of early childhood education in Ontario.

NCCC also supports the involvement of ECE and recreational degree placement students, as well as, volunteers. Substitute educators ("supply") also work at NCCC to replace regular staff as required.

All employees, placement students and substitute staff must complete a Vulnerable Sector Police Reference Check prior to starting their employment. Parent volunteers are required to complete a Police Reference Check and are responsible for covering any fees associated with it.

The primary responsibility of the staff is to facilitate each child's development and ensure their safety. The staff uses principles, as outlined in the philosophy of NCCC and works in partnership with Northlea School's teaching staff, Principal and Vice-Principals. All staff work in accordance with the CCEYA, Public Health standards and the guidelines set out by the City of Toronto and Ministry of Education to provide high quality care the children of the childcare.

NCCC follows the ratios as outlined in the *CCEYA*, as follows:

Toddler:	1 employee for every 5 children
Preschool:	1 employee for every 8 children
Kindergarten:	1 employee for every 13 children
School Age:	1 employee for every 15 children

The *CCEYA* allows for some variations in ratios during beginning and end of day hours.

Licensed Capacity

Effective September, 2015 NCCC will be licensed for a maximum of 235 children as follows:

- 15 Toddlers
- 24 Preschool children
- 80 Full-Day Kindergarten children
- 116 School Age children

Actual enrolment in all programs will vary depending on circumstances.

Waiting List, Registration and Priority Sequences

Waiting List and Registration- Applications for enrolment are kept on file and maintained in the order of registration priority based on the date that the fully completed application was received by NCCC.

Applications will be accepted for children who do not reside within the Northlea School catchment area. However, a child must reside within the catchment area when a spot is offered and proof of address must be provided at the time of registration. For example, two pieces of identification that show your address, such as a phone bill. For kindergarten and school age programs, the child must also be enrolled in Northlea School and we do not accept children who are bused to and from the school.

Priority Sequences - When a space becomes available within the child care, it is offered to children on the waiting list (if there is one) in accordance with the priority sequences described below. When there is no waiting list, spots are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Note that in rare and exceptional circumstances NCCC reserves the right to deviate from the priority sequences and offer a space to child. Such circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

Priority Sequence: Toddler Program (all children must reside within the English Northlea School catchment area)

1. Siblings of children currently enrolled in an NCCC program
2. Children on the waiting list

3. Toddlers will remain in their program until September. If a space becomes available before September in the preschool room the oldest child 30 months or older will be moved. This will be done at the discretion of the Director.

Priority Sequence: Preschool Program (all children must reside within the English Northlea School catchment area)

1. Children currently enrolled in the NCCC Toddler program (priority within this group is determined according to their original registration date with NCCC)
2. Siblings of children currently enrolled in an NCCC program
3. Children on the waiting list

Priority Sequence: Full-Day Kindergarten and School Age Programs (all children enrolled in JK must reside within the [English] Northlea School catchment area and are enrolled in Northlea School Full Day and we do not accept children who are bused to and from school.)

1. Children currently enrolled in an NCCC program (priority within this group is determined according to their original registration date with NCCC)
2. Siblings of children currently enrolled in an NCCC child care program
3. Other children on the waiting list

Children in the Toddler, Preschool, Kindergarten and School Age programs will be sent a "are you returning" form in the spring in an effort to help us plan for the new school year. Please note, we still require 8 weeks' notice to withdraw a child.

Days and Hours of Operation

The child care operates from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, with the following exceptions:

1. New Year's Day
2. Family Day
3. Good Friday
4. Easter Monday
5. Victoria Day
6. Canada Day
7. Civic Holiday (August)
8. The week before Labour Day
9. Labour Day
10. Thanksgiving Day
11. Christmas Eve (NCCC usually closes at 1 p.m. but may be closed for the full-day depending on the year and what day it falls on – advance notice is always provided to families)
12. Christmas Day
13. Boxing Day
14. The period between Christmas Day and New Year's Day
15. Any emergency closing by Northlea School (e.g. snow or ice storms)

Full-day care is available for all children registered in the Toddler, Preschool, Full-Day Kindergarten and School Age programs on Professional Activity (PA) days and during March Break.

Fees

Registration/Administration Fees

A fifty dollar (\$50.00) NON-REFUNDABLE administration fee is required upon the offer and acceptance of a spot with NCCC. A twenty dollar (\$30.00) administration fee is required with Summer Camp registration.

Last Month Deposit

At the time of registration, a void cheque with a signed Personal Preauthorized Debit Agreement (PAD) for monthly fee of the program must be provided.

This deposit will be held by NCCC and applied towards the fees due the LAST month during which the child is enrolled at NCCC, provided the notice period specified in the section "Withdrawal" is complied with.

Monthly Program Fees

All fees are to be paid by pre-authorized debit (PAD). Parents are required to complete a PAD agreement form, which for new parents will be provided at the time of enrolment.

NCCC reserves the right to raise program fees at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Fees are typically raised on an annual basis in September but may be adjusted in-year if required to cover unanticipated increases in operating costs. The fee schedule effective the following September is available as of July 1 every year.

Non-Sufficient Funds or Other Problem Cheques (for Summer Camp)

Any pre-authorized debit that is returned by a financial institution for non-sufficient funds, and all cheques (for Summer Camp) returned by a financial institution for non-sufficient funds, no chequing privileges, or any other reason, must be resubmitted in certified form along with a Thirty dollar (\$30.00) service charge.

Late Fees

Children are to be picked up by 6:00 p.m. Parents who are late picking up their children will be charged a late fee. See "Arrival and Pick up" section

Absences

There is no fee adjustment for a child's absence from the child care. Fees must continue to be paid during absence due to illness, vacation or other reasons.

Income Tax Receipts

Income tax receipts for the previous year's fees paid to NCCC will be issued before the end of February. All outstanding fees, services charges and/or penalties must be paid before receipts can be issued.

Admission Process

An orientation will be arranged to familiarize families and children with the surroundings, answer questions, and review the admission forms required prior to enrolment.

The following must be completed and received by NCCC prior to the first day your child attends NCCC:

- A complete medical form that indicates the child's immunization record, as required for licensing and Toronto Public Health.
- A registration information package completed with all NCCC consent forms.
- Personal Pre-Authorized Debit Agreement form
- Cheques: This option is only available for families that were enrolled at NCCC prior to September 2016. An additional charge of \$15 will be added to your monthly fee per family.
- Signed parent handbook acknowledgement form.

Withdrawal

In the event of the permanent withdrawal of a child from NCCC, **a minimum of eight-(8) weeks' notice of such withdrawal must be given**, in writing, to the Director. Failure to give this notice will result in forfeiture of the last month's prepaid fee, and the charge and collection of the balance.

In addition, a permanent space cannot be guaranteed and no priority placement given if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child from the program, for example, for summer months in the Preschool program. In this case, your child will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list for re-admission to the child care.

There may be instances when NCCC cannot accommodate the ongoing or future needs of a currently enrolled or wait-listed child. These matters will be brought to the attention of the NCCC Board of Directors. In the event that a child's placement with NCCC is determined to be inappropriate, NCCC reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any such child from the program or waiting list.

Absences, Drop-Off, Pick-Up and Attendance

Children depend upon regular routines for their own sense of security. We recommend that you establish fixed hours to pick-up and drop-off your child. To ensure continuity and smooth operation of planned activities for the day, we strongly advise that NCCC staff be informed of changes in a child's/families schedule.

ABSENCES:

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If a child is going to be absent or late for any reason, NCCC should be notified as soon as possible (ideally before 9:00 am) to help staff plan for the day's activities. Parents of kindergarten and school age children must notify both NCCC and Northlea School's Safe Arrival of any absences.

It is important to inform NCCC as soon as possible about the type of illness a child has, if an absence is due to illness. This will help staff to identify symptoms in other children in the child care with whom the child has come in contact. There is no fee adjustment for days on which a child is absent.

Staff members must be notified of a child's arrival in the morning. Similarly, staff members must be notified that a child is leaving. Parents or an authorized adult must sign their children in and out at drop-off and pick-up.

DROP-OFF:

- Toddler and preschool children should be dropped off in their respective rooms starting at 7:30.
- Children in Kindergarten can be dropped-off at the NCCC designated room prior to Kindergarten start time. The designated room for each child will be communicated via email before the beginning of the school year.
- School Age children should be dropped off at an NCCC designated room before 8:20 a.m. and in the playground at the back of the school after 8:20 a.m. (weather permitting).
- Toddlers and young children depend on a regular arrival and departure hours for their own comfort and security. Parents are encouraged to arrive at a time that is beneficial to both the child and his or her family.

PICK-UP:

- Toddler children get picked-up from the toddler room before 5:55pm.
- Preschool children get picked-up from the preschool room.
- Kindergarten and School Age children get picked up from designated rooms before 5:55pm.
- When picking up your child, if you have a sibling/other child(ren) with you please ensure that both children are following NCCC policies and procedures, and that you are the one supervising the child that is not in our care.
- Any child picked up after 6pm will be in the Preschool room.

Before the first day of school in September, NCCC will e-mail Kindergarten and School Age parents to advise them of before and after school drop-off and pick-up locations and procedures.

ATTENDANCE:

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- NCCC maintains attendance records for all children.
- Parents or caregivers **must sign their children in** with NCCC staff when they are dropped-off with the child care and **sign them out** when they are picked up.
- Parents are also encouraged to **verbally notify staff** that a child has arrived or is being picked up.
- Once the school day is in progress NCCC assumes that all NCCC kindergarten and school age children are attending classes and will be coming to NCCC after school unless we are informed otherwise by the parent, guardian or Northlea School staff.
- After school, when the bell rings at 3:30pm, kindergarten and school age children are dismissed by their Northlea School teachers. Northlea School teachers and staff are asked to notify child care staff if they are detaining NCCC children after dismissal (with parental approval).
- NCCC must be notified if a child is withdrawn from school during the day.

The following procedures are followed when a kindergarten or school age child is unaccounted for following the dismissal bell:

- NCCC staff check with the child's Northlea School teacher to confirm attendance or whereabouts of the child.
- If the teacher is not available (or a supply teacher is present) NCCC staff will check the Northlea School attendance folders, sign out book and arrival information as necessary.
- NCCC staff will have the child paged within the school building to come to the NCCC meeting place.
- One NCCC staff will then do a physical scan of the outdoor and indoor area, including bathrooms, for the child while the other NCCC staff members supervise the SA group.
- The missing child's parents are contacted to resolve any confusion regarding pick up information.
- If the child's parents confirm that the child is supposed to be with NCCC and the child has not been found, NCCC will then contact local police to report the missing child.
- NCCC will also make a call to the local police to report a missing child if, after searching the school and calling all contact numbers, NCCC staff are still not able to reach a parent or caregiver to confirm the child's whereabouts.
- NCCC is required to follow the NCCC serious occurrence policy and notify Toronto Children's Services as well as the Ministry of Education of the incident.

School Age Supervision

With written parental consent, children in Grades 1 and above are permitted to move in partners through Northlea School with the permission of the NCCC staff during child care hours. Children in Grade 1 will always be partnered with a child in Grade 2 or above.

School age children are also permitted to go into the school with the permission of an NCCC staff member to the bathrooms or for other approved purposes from the back playground in partners.

NCCC staff maintain supervision checks on the buddy system. The checks include having the children ask before leaving the group, recording partner movement, requiring the children check in upon their return and by following up on lengthy trips to the bathroom or for other purposes immediately.

Late Fee Procedures

NCCC closes at 6:00 pm if the child/ren's parent/guardian have not come to the room or the designated room a late fee per child will be enforced by NCCC staff. The time of departure is what appears on the clock in the childcare room.

NCCC's late fee is \$1.00 per minute per child after 6:00 pm upon parent/guardian departure/pick-up, the parent/guardian and staff members on duty must sign a late form indicating the late departure time and the late fee that is owing.

NCCC also has a graduated late fee charge which is in place to deter habitual late parents. The purpose of this is to cease or minimize further late pick-ups. For the third late pick up in any one month, the parent/guardian will be charged a \$10.00 surcharge in addition to the fee of \$1.00 per minute per child.

It is expected that parent/guardian will telephone NCCC and inform staff of a late pick-up. The telephone call does not waive the late fees. It is highly encouraged that if a parent is unable to pick-up their child, an emergency contact designate be contacted by the parent for pick-up. Parents are expected to inform NCCC of the name of the individual who will be picking up the child/ren. Upon arrival of this individual, photo identification must be presented to the NCCC staff. If this results in a late pick-up, a fee will be enforced (as noted above).

If a child is present after 6:00 pm and no contact is made by the parent/guardian to NCCC by 7:00 pm and if NCCC staff are unable to make contact with the parent(s) or emergency contact individuals, the local police, and/or the Children's Aid Society will be contacted.

A late form will be completed upon late pick-up. This form outlines the child/ren's name, the date, the time the parent/guardian and child/ren are leaving the premises, the late fee charge, the parents' signature, staff members' signatures, and payment amount and date received with parent/guardian and staff signatures.

Late fees are billed at the end of each month and [will be withdrawn from the account authorized in pre-authorized debit account?] must be paid within one month and the full amount is transferred to the staff who were required to stay late on the day of the occurrence.

Personal Belongings

Clothing should be appropriate for physical activity, the weather and the season. For children in the Toddler, Preschool and Full-Day Kindergarten programs, a second set of clothing must be kept at the child care in their bags. We strongly urge that all clothing be labelled with your child's name.

Children in toddler and preschool may bring a labelled favourite toy, blanket or other "comfort" item from home for quiet periods.

While staff is diligent in looking after each child's personal belongings, NCCC and Northlea School are not responsible for loss or damage to personal belongings brought to or left at NCCC.

Field Trips

As a part of our program, the children will occasionally (often during the summer months) go on special outings to places of interest. Parents will be notified of the excursion in advance. Parents who wish for their child to participate are required to sign a Parent Consent Form for these outings. Parents are welcome to join in but must notify the Director in advance.

All parent volunteers must sign a copy of the volunteer guidelines and must have a clear Vulnerable Sector Police Reference Check within a year prior to volunteering. If parents do not want their child to participate in the planned excursions, they are required to make alternate arrangements for care. Children are expected to travel to and from the excursion on NCCC arranged transportation.

Weather Alerts and Extreme Weather Advisories

NCCC posts Toronto Public Health and weather advisories on the glass in the hallway by the main entrance to the child care. NCCC staff adapt outdoor play to accommodate the weather warnings and conditions.

Gross motor activities performed will be performed inside NCCC on days when outdoor play is not possible due to wet, unsafe or extreme weather.

Summer Weather Conditions

NCCC staff addresses summer weather conditions by modeling and requiring that all children wear hats and sunscreen. All parents are asked to apply a full coat of sunscreen to their child in the morning and to sign a permission to apply sunscreen form. NCCC provides extra sunscreen and staff will re-apply it throughout the day for Preschool and Kindergarten children. School age children will be allowed to re-apply sunscreen for themselves throughout the day. School age children asked to bring their own sunscreen, however NCCC will provide sunscreen if they don't. Children are asked to bring their own hats, however NCCC does have a limited number of spare hats available.

Children enrolled in full-time programs go outside for two-hours every day, weather permitting. However NCCC staff reserve the right to regulate and/or limit outdoor activity levels and playtime in the warmer months if necessary due to extreme heat, smog and UV warnings or advisories. These warnings and advisories are in place to help us maintain a safe outdoor activity time. NCCC staff reminds the children to drink lots of water and make water and cups available on the playground in the warmer months. NCCC also provides a balance of active and quiet, calm activities to accommodate for the heat. The children will remain indoors when the temperature is hotter than 25 Celsius with a combined humidex and smog warning, (temperatures are guidelines and are at the discretion of the director).

Winter Weather Conditions

NCCC staff addresses winter weather conditions by modeling appropriate dress for the cold weather and ensuring that the children have appropriate outdoor attire on to keep warm. NCCC has a limited supply of spare winter clothing that children will be asked to wear if they need extra layers or dry clothes. NCCC staff assesses the playground surface conditions before outdoor playtimes. NCCC staff reserve the right to adjust and/or limit outdoor play times to account for icy or extremely cold conditions. All children enrolled in full-time programs go outside for two-hours every day, unless the winter conditions are deemed to be unsafe for the children by the staff of NCCC. The

children will remain indoors when the temperature is colder than -15 Celsius (including wind-chill) (temperatures are guidelines and are at the discretion of the director)

Behaviour Guidance

NCCC has established a Behaviour Guidance policy which staff implement in order to maintain a positive and safe environment for the children. NCCC staff will manage the behaviour of the children attending NCCC in accordance with the CCEYA and the NCCC Behaviour Guidance Policy. Recognizing the need to address situations involving inappropriate and unmanageable behaviour, NCCC is committed to actions that preserve the self-esteem of the child. For further details please request a copy of the Behaviour Guidance Policy from the Director.

ACCESS, EQUITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

NCCC strives to provide a secure, supportive and trusting environment in which children can develop and grow at their own pace. NCCC recognizes and respects diversity in appearance, culture, age, ability, race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, same sex partnerage, marital status, family status, immigration status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, religious affiliation, level of literacy, language and social socio-economic status, in our school and the City of Toronto.

NCCC is committed to maintaining a working, caring and learning environment that:

- fosters respect for the dignity and well-being of each person
- provides an opportunity for all individuals to develop to their full potential
- is constructive in the pursuit of excellence
- ensures equitable access and outcomes for all persons

NCCC will strive to prevent and eliminate both individual and systematic forms of racial and ethno cultural mistreatment and harassment of its children, parents, staff, volunteers, students and any other persons involved with the Centre, in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the guidelines set out in this policy.

Duty to Report Suspected Child Abuse

NCCC staff members are bound by the *Child and Family Services Act* (C.F.S.A) to report any suspected child abuse. The criteria for reporting child abuse is defined in the C.F.S.A and reiterated in the NCCC Child Abuse Policy.

The child care professional's duty to report suspected child abuse overrides the provisions of any other provincial statute, specifically those provisions that would otherwise prohibit disclosure by a professional or official. (C.F.S.A.s72 (7), (8)(e.g. CCEYA). Child Care professionals must report the suspected abuse directly to Children's Aid Society. A child care operator/supervisor/director is not permitted to provide advice to the individual before the report is made to the appropriate Children's Aid Society (CAS) (C.F.S.A.s72(3).

The penalty imposed for failure to report a suspicion of child abuse emphasizes that the child's safety must take precedent over all other concerns, including confidentiality of information and all other provincial statutes. Any professional who fails to report their suspicion of a child's abuse is liable, upon conviction, to a fine of up to \$1000.00 (C.F.S.A.s.72 (5)(6)(6.1)(6.2)

According to the Act all persons in making a report of suspected child abuse to CAS are protected in law against civil action unless the person is proven to have acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the person's suspicion C.F.S.A. s72(7).

Contact information:

Children's Aid Society of Toronto: (416) 924-4646

Catholic Children's Aid Society: (416)395-1500

Jewish Family and Children Services of Toronto (416)638-7800

Native Child and Family Services Toronto (416) 969-8636

Parent Conduct

NCCC strives to maintain a comfortable and positive environment for parents, children and staff. Parents are required to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains a positive atmosphere in their interaction with children, staff and other parents. It is necessary to use appropriate language and tone of voice even when addressing concerns

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at NCCC (the parking lot included). The Director and the Board of Directors will address issues regarding parent conduct.

Parents should address concerns regarding individual issues, issues with other children or program related issues with the classroom staff, the Director of NCCC and then may contact a Board member to find out if their concern requires discussion or a decision at the Board level. Parents should not discipline children who are not their own and who are in the care of NCCC. Confidentiality is a priority at NCCC so the classroom staff or the Director may request a meeting away from the drop off/pick up area to ensure confidentiality is maintained. A Board member can be contacted by using the Board of Director phone list see appendix A or by providing your concern in writing to the Director.

The process for addressing issues of parent conduct is as follows:

- The Director and/or a representative of the Board of Directors will speak with the parent involved and address the conduct that occurred.
- The Director and/or the Board of Directors will put in writing specific concerns regarding parent conduct.
- The Board of Directors will consider issues concerning parent conduct individually on a case by case basis. If the Board of Directors deems the conduct of a parent to be extreme or uncontrollable the family may be asked to leave NCCC.

Acceptable Behaviour:

- Politeness and consideration for all people at all times
- Respect
- Kindness and empathy
- Solving conflicts and differences in a peaceful manner
- Positive communication and cooperation

Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Tease or bully
- Unwanted physical contact
- Use language that is hurtful, profane, or otherwise inappropriate
- Threaten to harm anyone
- Raise your voice and create an unwelcoming environment

Parent Involvement

Parents and caregivers are invited to become actively involved in NCCC. A supportive partnership between parents/caregivers and the child care will ensure the optimum quality care for each child in NCCC.

The following are ways in which parents can participate in their child's care and the ongoing operation of the corporation:

- An orientation to NCCC upon the child's enrolment
- Informal sharing of information about the child at the start or end of the day with staff
- Formal communications about the child's progress in scheduled parent-educator meetings
- Parents may arrange meetings to discuss their child by contacting the Director or program staff
- Written communication and resources provided through news briefs, notes sent home, notices posted throughout NCCC, and minutes of meetings of the NCCC Board of Directors (posted)
- Visits and participation from parents at any time throughout NCCC's hours of operation. Parents are encouraged to visit; however please check with the Director to ensure that the visit will be at an opportune time.
- Parent/educator meetings
- Fundraising events. e.g. NCCC BBQ in May/June each year
- Attendance at the Annual General Meeting, usually held in late November
- Participation on NCCC's Board of Directors. Each fall NCCC looks for volunteers to fill any upcoming vacant positions on the Board. If for some reason a position becomes vacant during the year a volunteer will be sought. Parents interested in serving on the Board are encouraged to contact any member of the current Board of Directors (see Appendix A) or the Director.

Illness

A sick child does not function well at school or in child care, and his/her presence may infect others. Please prepare for emergency care when your child is ill.

In accordance with the *CCEYA*, every child will be visually checked by a staff member to ensure that he/she is free of symptoms of ill health. The daily health check is necessary to prevent the spread of communicable diseases as well as to protect the ill child.

The Director or the staff designate has the authority to refuse to accept any child who, in the staff's opinion, is not fit to attend the child care that day. The parent or designated adult representative will be asked to take the child home or make other child care arrangements.

Similarly, if a child exhibits symptoms of ill health during the day and the staff feel the child is unfit to participate in the program, the parent or designated adult representative

will be notified and asked to pick up him/her within a reasonable amount of time. The Director or staff designate must approve any other arrangements. An ill child will be isolated from other children until the parent or designated adult representative arrives.

Except for mild colds, a child with a communicable disease will not be admitted to the child care.

Our basic guideline is that a child should not be at NCCC if he/she exhibits any of the following:

1. A temperature of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher. If a child has been away or sent home from NCCC with a fever, he/she may not return until his/her temperature has been normal for 24 hours. If a child develops a fever while at the child care the parents or designated adult will be asked to take him/her home. Child may not attend the following day.
2. Diarrhea. If a child has diarrhea the child should not be at NCCC. If the child has diarrhea the parents or designated adult will be asked to take him/her home. See the Ill Child Policy.
3. Vomiting
4. Unexplained rashes
5. Paleness, or flushed face, or constant crying
6. Yellow discharge from the eyes, crustiness around the eyes, puffy eyes or red eyes
7. Yellow nasal mucous
8. Lethargic, emotional or distraught behaviour that prevents the child from participating in daily activities and routines (including outdoor play)

These signs and symptoms are fairly obvious and indicate the child is ill. However, there are other times when it is difficult for a parent to determine if the child should be at the child care. A slight cold or the end of an illness are two examples. In such instances, a general guideline for determining whether the child is well enough to be at NCCC is this: if the child is too ill to participate in the outdoor part of the programme, the child is too ill to be at the child care. For further guidance, please call the Director.

There are other times when a child is not showing signs of a definite illness but yet is not able to handle the activity of the day. On such occasions, the Director or designate will decide whether the child should be taken home.

A doctor's note may be required for the child to be re-admitted NCCC at the discretion of the Director.

Communicable Diseases

If a child is suspected of having any communicable disease, alternate care arrangements must be made. If symptoms develop during the day the parent or designated adult will be asked to take the child home immediately. The child will be accepted back into NCCC only with a note from the doctor saying that the child's condition is no longer contagious.

Immunization Records

NCCC is required to maintain records of immunization for each child. These are checked annually by a Licensing representative or local medical officer of health as to whether all required immunizations have been given. Parents are therefore asked to maintain up-to-date immunization records for their children.

Medication

Parents should discuss with staff any requirements for medication administration at NCCC and sign a Medication form authorizing NCCC to administer such medication to their child. Any medication to be administered by staff must be prescribed by the child's physician. Prescriptions must be current and detailed. NCCC will only administer non-prescription medications with the written request by the child's physician. Only RECEs can administer medication. Please note that all medication must be in its original container.

Any diaper rash cream or Vaseline provided by a parent must be accompanied by a signed permission form.

Allergies

Parents are asked to inform the Director and staff of any allergies their child may have and what types of reactions to expect prior to starting at NCCC. In the event of anaphylaxis, parents are required to get form signed by their doctor prior to start date. Although we cannot change the environment of the child care, every effort possible will be made to minimize contact with the offending food or substance.

As exposure to nuts can produce severe allergic reaction in some children, NCCC is a designated nut-safe child care and uses no nuts or nut products in food preparation or craft activities. Therefore, parents are asked not to send foods, snacks or personal products containing nuts or nut products (including peanut butter, granola bars, M&M's, lip balm, or any products containing nut oils etc.) with their child to the child care.

All treats and snacks brought in by parents must be store bought and labelled nut free. An ingredient list must be attached to all treats. If treats contain nuts and traces of nuts they will not be accepted by the NCCC staff. All treats and snacks must also be approved by the Director or designate prior to purchasing to ensure that all allergies in the centre are accounted for.

Lice

NCCC is a lice and nit free environment. NCCC will conduct routine lice checks in all programs in an effort to reduce lice from spreading. In the event lice/nits are found in a child's hair they will be removed from the program and parents will be asked to pick up their child. Upon return to the childcare the NCCC Administration team will do another check of the child's hair.

Separation

At the time of registration the parent and/or legal guardian (s) will inform NCCC of the specific custody/access arrangements, and will provide NCCC with a copy of any relevant legal documents, including the parents agreement or court order (interim or permanent). Updated copies of the agreement must be provided to NCCC as soon as there are any variations to an agreement or court order are made. In the absence of a custody/access agreement or court order, the parent (s) and/or legal guardian (s) will provide a statement signed by both parent (s) and/or legal guardian (s) specifying the custody/access arrangements, and this statement may only be amended in writing (signed by both parents) or by court order.

Fire Drills and Emergency Procedures

Fire drills are held at least monthly at NCCC. Staff and children carry out the drill by leaving the building even in the winter months. Staff are informed of procedures to follow in case of fire and instructions are posted in each room of the child care.

Should an evacuation of NCCC ever be necessary, the Director and staff will take the children to the **Holland-Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital** located at 150 Kilgour Rd. for temporary shelter. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible.

Accidents and Injuries

In the case of serious accidents such as the loss of consciousness after a fall or excessive loss of blood from a cut, the staff will take the child by ambulance to the hospital designated by the ambulance. A parent or designate will be called as soon as possible.

In the case of less serious accidents, such as scrapes or bumps, the staff will give minor first aid treatment and will complete an injury report for discussion with the parents if required. A copy of the signed injury report will be given to the parent.

It is NCCC's policy to ensure all staff have valid certifications in first aid and CPR (Level C)

Parking

Many parents will arrive by car to drop their child off at NCCC. Designated parking for drop-off and pick-up is available at the North end of the school next to the main entrance to the child care. A very limited number of parking spots are available in the North lot and demand for spots is extremely high during peak drop-off and pick-up times (i.e. between 8:00-8:30 a.m. and 4:30-5:30 p.m.).

Parking in the North lot is strictly limited to **10 MINUTES** and drivers are encouraged to back-in to spots in order to maximize their view of pedestrians and children who may be walking through the lot.

There is also parking for drop-off and pick-up in the school lot to the East after school hours. If you anticipate staying at NCCC for any length of time, we strongly recommend that you park in designated areas along adjacent streets.

Parking in the NCCC roadway or in front of the gates may result in a fine or the car being towed away.

No Parking in Fire Lane and no parking in the Handicapped Spot (unless you have a handicap permit).

Meals

No nuts or nut products are served at NCCC. Any outside food brought into NCCC must be store bought and nut-free.

Toddler/Pre-school

Children are served a nutritious catered lunch, plus two (2) snacks. The menu is prepared in advance and copies are available. If your child has any food allergies or special diet requirements, please be sure to inform our staff in writing. We will gladly arrange to make the necessary substitutions.

All meals, snacks, and beverages meet the recommendations set out by Canada's Food Guide and the guidelines set forth by the CCEYA.

Full-Day Kindergarten:

Children will be served one snack before and after school. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child brings a lunch and snacks for during school.

School Age:

Children will be served one snack before and after school. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child brings a lunch and snacks for during school. Lunches should contain a cold/ice pack to maintain a safe temperature for stored food.

Specialized Services:

NCCC has the ability to access specialized services and resources to assist with meeting the individual needs of a child through Toronto Children's Services and Community Living if necessary.

If a parent or guardian raises a potential need for specialized services the following practices are followed:

- the staff and/or Director will meet with the parent(s)/guardian(s) to listen to concerns or questions and offer literature or help to develop program goals for the child.
- NCCC staff and/or Director may record observations of the child's development to follow up on the concerns and questions voiced
- program goals may be reviewed with the parent(s)/guardian(s) within a time frame designed to address the individual circumstance.

If NCCC staff are concerned that a child may not be meeting developmental milestones the NCCC staff member will, in consultation with the Director:

- speak to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child regarding the observations and concerns
- design interim program goals to address the staff and/or Director concerns.
- share updates and information with the parent(s)/guardian(s) within a time frame designed to address the individual circumstances.

If after the above steps are taken it is agreed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and Director that an external resource should be consulted, the following practices are followed:

- a consent form would be presented to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child to have a Toronto Children's Services and Community Living-approved resource staff become involved.
- parent(s)/guardians) provide consent (no action can be taken without consent)
- the services are typically provided to NCCC at no cost however any charges are the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s).

Mission Statement

Northlea Community Childcare Centre ("NCCC" or the "Centre") believes that children are competent, capable, and curious and have great potential. NCCC supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, and staff.

Enhanced learning experiences are an integral part of NCCC daily curriculum and cannot be accomplished without ongoing collaboration and communication between the families, and daycare regarding their child's progress and their daily life at daycare. We welcome ongoing discussions with parents and caregivers regarding their child's progress and their daily life at daycare.

NCCC implements the CCEYA, HDLH, and ELECT Framework to create learning opportunities for the children in our care.

Scope: Front line staff, Administrative staff, Parents, children, and Board of Directors

Philosophy statement

NCCC strives to achieve an inclusive enriched environment, which honors and respects all children's beliefs, culture, language, and experiences acquired from their family and community. NCCC achieves inclusiveness through the implementation of a play-based curriculum in both indoor and outdoor environments . Our curriculum is designed to foster the health and well being of the children in our care. We are committed to the

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belief that children learn to care about other people, understand others feelings, cooperate and share, to express their opinions, resolve conflicts, develop self confidence, self-worth, and self regulation through the provision of enhanced play-based learning opportunities based upon observed needs and interests of the children.

Our teachers provide learning opportunities which use the child's needs and interests to provide skill development and further the child's interest/knowledge based on the activity/area of interest. Learning opportunities occur through the use observations and higher conversations with the children in our care.

With the support of the parents and administrative staff our frontline staff strives to provide a positive nurturing environment in which children's play is fostered through exploration and inquiry. Children learn about themselves, their peers and the world in which they live through investigation and exploration, through art, drama, music, and social interactions. It is the teacher's role to facilitate the children's learning experiences based upon their needs and interests while providing opportunity for each child to advance their knowledge base and broaden their interest of the topic/or address an identified need.

Terminology/Definitions:

Play based learning: Children learn best through exploration and hands on experiences.

Higher conversations: uncovering the level of understanding of the children through the use of Who, What, When Where, Why, and How when seeking to understand the interest of the child. (e.g. where did you learn how to do that, who showed you how to do this? etc.)

Learning experiences: Observed and documented interests of children that provide direction for program curriculum.

Enhanced Learning experiences: Providing materials and resources that further the interests of children (e.g. Books, craft materials, etc.)

Interactive Supervision: Participating within an activity area to meet the needs of the children within the play area and provide the needed support and guidance within the moment.

Collaboration: The act of involving parents, children, room partners, outside resources to provide learning experiences within a program.

Observations: Making use of observed actions or interests to provide direction to curriculum provided to children.

Documentation: Recording areas of interest and conversations had with children to identify children's interests, and provide future direction within the program.

ELECT Framework: Early Learning for Every Child Today. Evidence based outline designed to support the ability of front line teachers to demonstrate positive learning outcomes within their curriculum and provide future direction for learning within the program.

How Does Learning Happen (HDLH)

CCEYA: Formerly known as the Day Nurseries Act, the Childcare Early Years Act provides daycares with expectations/guidelines (e.g. Staff student ratios, inclusive practices, etc.)

Embedded learning opportunities: The act of incorporating skill development into the learning environment (e.g. Self help skills in dramatic play area).

Our Strategy

Our strategies to achieve our program statement are guided by the work done on Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years ("How Does Learning Happen"). We understand that learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments. We understand that for children to grow and flourish, the four following foundational conditions need to exist:

- A sense of Belonging,
- A sense of Well-Being,
- Opportunities and support for Engagement, and
- Opportunities and support for Expression.

We will adopt the following 11 strategies to create these conditions:

1. Promote an environment which is healthy, safe, and supports general well being
2. Promote an environment which ensures good nutrition and safe food preparation
3. Support positive and responsive interactions
4. Encourage the children to interact and communicate
5. Foster exploration, play and inquiry
6. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences
7. Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences
8. Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, active play and quiet time
9. Foster the engagement of and communications with parents
10. Involve local community partners
11. Support others in relation to continuous professional learning

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Plans of Action for the Toddler Program

NCCC's action plan is designed to support the Centre's mission statement and philosophy. The action plan is based on the City of Toronto's quality assessment document AQI that all non-profit centres are required to adhere to. The Plans of Action listed below, are a means to execute the 11 key strategies required to support the Program Statement requirement from Section 46.3 in the Child Care and Early Years Licensing manual from the Ministry of Education.

1) Being aware of how the day is planned allows for consistency, self-regulation, minimizes negative behaviour and promotes general well being. "A Safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress." (HDLH, p.30). In support of this, we will prepare and post a daily written and visual schedule to meet or exceed expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-1).

2) An intentional plan for learning experience that children will be exposed to, promotes the ongoing learning opportunities and developmental growth for all children enrolled in the program. "As defined in Early Learning Framework, early years curriculum is the sum total of experiences, activities, and events that occur within an inclusive environment designed to foster children's well-being, learning, and development and ensure meaningful participation for every child. It begins with an informed understanding of what children are capable of learning and how they learn effectively: it sets out goals for children learning and development, health and well-being, and it provides direction for educators." (HDLH, p.15). In support of this, we will prepare a program plan to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-2).

3) Staff will use their observations, knowledge of child development and the children's cues to promote continuous learning opportunities. Staff will share with, and encourage families to be active participants in their child's care environment "Educators are reflective practitioners who learn about children using various strategies. They listen, observe, document, and discuss with others, families in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. They observe and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them. Educators consider their own practices and approaches and the impacts they have on children and families, and others. Educators use this knowledge, gained through observing and discussing with others, and their professional judgment to create contexts to support children's learning,

development, health and well-being” (HDLH, p. 19). In support of this, we will undertake to deliver learning experiences to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-3).

4) A visual environment created through displays that are inclusive and are changed regularly to reflect recent interests and artwork created by the children promotes well-being. “Enabling children to develop a sense of belonging as part of a group is also a key contributor to their lifelong well-being. A sense of belonging is supported when each child’s unique spirit, individuality, and presence are valued.” (HDLH, p.35). In support of this we will create a visual environment through displays to meet or exceed expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-4).

5) Materials reflecting sensory, science and nature encourage children to explore through cause and effect experimentation and observation. Continual exposure to these materials and experiences allow children to learn more about their environments. “Optimal conditions for learning occur when we are fully engaged. For children, this happens in play that evolves from the child’s natural curiosity- active play that allows children to explore with their bodies, minds, and senses, stimulating them to ask questions, test theories, solve problems, engage in creative thinking, and make meaning of the world around them. These investigations through **play fuse** intellect and feeling to help children make connections and develop the capacity for higher order thinking.” (HDLH p.35). In support of this, we will provide a sensory, science and nature program to meet or exceed expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-5).

6) Providing independent experiences through different mediums for children, creative art promotes self-expression and individuality. Regular expectations within the daily schedule and children’s interests allow for time to complete/extend the creative process. “Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children’s learning, enhances their creative problem solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity.” (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this we will provide an Art Program to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-6).

7) A cozy inviting environment is created to encourage natural opportunities for language and literacy enjoyment. Children are able to retell stories and situations with acceptable props, thus providing opportunities to enhance storytelling experiences and language development. “Programs can best support emerging literacy skills by providing open ended materials that foster imagination and symbolic play, including signs, symbols, and props that support print awareness in authentic contexts; by encouraging children to engage in play with words and sounds in son and rhyme; and by offering numerous opportunities for children to share books and stories.” (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide language and literacy materials and a program that

utilizes these to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-7).

8) By exposing children to an assortment of cultural music and music genres, staff is promoting skills such as language development, rhythm awareness, self-regulation and self-concept. "Creating and designing fuse together the cognitive, emotional, and physical domains- thinking, feeling, and doing. Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children's learning, enhances their creative problem solving-solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity." (HDLH, p.42) In support of this we will provide music and accessories and program that utilizes these to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-8).

9) We will promote daily active physical play learning experiences for children. "Through active play and physical exploration, children gain increasing levels of independence, learn to persevere and practice self-control, and develop a sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual mastery and competence." (HDLH, p.29-30). In support of this, we deliver physical play learning experiences that meet or exceed expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-9).

10) Offer children daily experiences with a multitude of materials and accessories. Offer play that develops spatial awareness, manipulation of 2-D and 3-D materials and problem solving. Block play offers opportunities to work together, imagine, learn about cause and effect, patterning and sequencing that is child initiated. Ensure spontaneous cognitive and manipulative learning experiences occur throughout the day. "Through play and inquiry, young children practice ways of learning and interacting with the world round them that they will apply to their lives. Problem solving and critical thinking, communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, initiative and citizenship are all capacities vital for success throughout school and beyond." (HDLH, p. 15) In support of this we will offer a Cognitive and Manipulative and Blocks and Construction materials and environment, and a program to engage in this environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-10).

11) Pretend play is an opportunity to provide children an environment and accessories, in good condition, which promotes imaginative play. Prop boxes are used to enhance the area and the program plan focus. Children enhance their social interactions, emotional development and language extension through open-ended play. Mirrors in the pretend area allow the children to see themselves from a different perspective. "As children engage in various forms of social play and are supported to recognize the varied capabilities and characteristics of other children, they learn to get along with others; to negotiate, collaborate, and communicate; and to care for others." (HDLH p.24). In support of this, we will offer pretend play accessories and environment, and program to

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engage in this environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline. (toddler-AQI-guideline-11)

12) Following the individual cues of the children, and developing an awareness of what each child brings and how they adapt to situations and environments allow us to provide the care and learning that best respects and reflects their needs. "gaining knowledge about children from multiple perspectives helps educators ensure that programs also value the unique and diverse characteristics of the children's families and the communities in which they live. It's not a "one size fits all" approach (HDLH, p. 18). In support of this we will develop an individual schedule for each child based on their needs and/or the family's requests and capture daily information to share with parents to meet or exceed the expectations for routine care practices described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-12)

13) Compliance with Regional Health Procedure and practices. To ensure this we will provide physical, instructional, and early learning and care supports for staff for diapering routines to meet or exceed the expectations for routine care practices described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-13).

14) Make food and eating time, including times when toddlers drink bottles, positive learning experiences that promote social interactions and self help skills. Staff will encourage children to have a healthy respect for food and eating. Use this time to engage and develop relationships with all the children. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for meals and snack times described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-14).

15) Ensure crib or cot bedding is hygienically maintained. Support staff to show flexibility with regards to the routine of the room and the cues of the children. Parents are engaged for guidance in sleep routines as appropriate. Pay attention to how we are meeting the needs of the children and what changes need to occur if we are not. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for cribs/cots, bedding and sleep times described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-15).

16) Ensure all materials, play equipment, furnishings, and fixed fixtures are in good working order, clean and safe for the children and staff. Provide health and safety resources on topics that are relevant to the children and families at the centre. "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress." (HDLH, p. 30). In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for health, safety, and toy and play equipment care described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-16).

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17) Ensure environment and practices for proper hand hygiene procedures that promote healthy living. Support the individual child's lifelong learning of proper hand hygiene. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for hand hygiene described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-17).

18) Transitions are a challenge and an opportunity for children. Staff will have better awareness of the individual child's cues while children further develop their self-regulation and self help skills at these times. Positive interactions during transitions provide a supportive learning environment. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for transitions and attendance verification described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-18).

19) Ensure all adults promote positive and supportive approach to all interactions with all children, peers and other adults in the room. Role model appropriate social skills throughout the day to support learning and growth. " When educators believe that all children have the right to participate and when they use inclusive approaches, they are more likely to find ways to reduce barriers, understand how each child learns, and create environments and experiences that are meaningful and engaging." (HDLH, p.36). In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for a positive atmosphere described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-19)

20) Staff operates as a team and with the engaged awareness to ensure supervision of the whole environment and safety of all. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for supervision of children described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-20)

21) Support staff in their competencies as professionals in following the cues of children and providing interactions that encourage children to extend their learning with activities that interest them and choices that support their learning goals. " When children initiate experiences, generate ideas, plan, and problem solve, make meaningful choices, and act spontaneously though play, they are more likely to be happy and get along well with others, to have lower levels of stress, and to be attentive and motivated to learn." (HDLH, p. 35). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for fostering children's independence described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-21)..

22) Promote interaction with children in a way that fosters self-esteem. Support the children as they learn to self- regulate their emotions and recognize empathy. "Studies show that when educators modeled and helped children express feelings, recognize others' feelings, and help others, children developed positive social skills such as perspective taking, empathy, and emotion regulation and were less likely to engage in problematic behaviors." (HDLH, p. 24-25). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the

expectations for supporting the development of self-esteem in children described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-22)

23) Promote use of developmentally appropriate and individually tailored strategies to support behavior guidance of the children. "An approach that emphasizes listening, responding to, and building on child initiated communication can be a more effective way to promote children's language acquisition and their development of social skills, empathetic understanding, and the ability to pay attention" (HDLH, p.41). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for behavior guidance described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-23).

24) Support staff to use their observations, past knowledge, and cues of the children to extend learning and encourage opportunities and support the child's learning path; through encouraging the children to ask questions, problem solve and experiment. "When educators are aware and able to understand and respond to the many languages children use to communicate, they give every child a voice" (HDLH, p. 41). In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for supporting communication and extending children's learning described in the attached guideline (toddler-AQI-guideline-24).

25) Ensure good nutrition and safe food preparation. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for menu and/or snack adaptations, food substitutions, preparation, handling and transportation of food, and the health and safety of the kitchen and food preparation area described in the attached guideline (nutrition-AQI-guidelines-1-7).

26) Ensure children are able to engage in outdoor play experiences safely. Physical play contributes to children's well-being through sport play; children learn turn taking, communication, sharing, good sportsmanship as well as gross motor skills. Balls and equipment are in good condition and accessible to children. "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them" (HDLH, p. 19). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for playground supervision and outdoor play space, equipment and learning material described in the attached guideline (Playground-AQI-guidelines-1-4).

27) Ensure collaboration with local community partners. "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them. It fosters a sense of belonging to the local community, the natural environment, and the larger universe of living things" (HDLH, p.19). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for connecting and

collaborating with local community and institutions described in the attached guideline (Working-together-AQI-guidelines-1-4).

28) Support staff in continuous growth and professional learning. Research, theory and practice suggests that one of the things important to achieve a high quality program is “provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice to support continuous professional learning and growth”. In support of this, we will capture as evidence, our practices and our efforts to being the best most knowledgeable professional we can be.

Plans of Action for the Preschool Program

NCCC’s action plan is designed to support the Centre’s mission statement and philosophy. The action plan is based on the City of Toronto’s quality assessment document AQI that all non-profit centres are required to adhere to. The Plans of Action listed below, are a means to execute the 11 key strategies required to support the Program Statement requirement from Section 46.3 in the Child Care and Early Years Licensing manual from the Ministry of Education.

- 1) Being aware of how the day is planned allows for consistency, self-regulation, minimizes negative behaviors and promotes general well being. "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children’s growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress." (HDLH, p. 30). In support of this, we will prepare and post a daily written and visual schedule to meet or exceed expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-1*).
- 2) An intentional plan for learning experiences that children will be exposed to, promotes the on-going learning opportunities and developmental growth for all children enrolled in the program. "As defined in Early Learning Framework, early years curriculum is the sum total of experiences, activities, and events that occur within an inclusive environment designed to foster children’s well-being, learning, and development and ensure meaningful participation for every child. It begins with an informed understanding of what children are capable of learning and how they learn effectively; it sets out goals for children’s learning and development, health, and well-being; and it provides direction for educators." (HDLH, p. 15). In support of this, we will prepare a Program Plan to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-2*).
- 3) Staff will use their observations, knowledge of child development and the children's cues to promote continuous learning opportunities. Staff will share with, and encourage families to be active participants in their child's care environment

"Educators are reflective practitioners who learn about children using various strategies. They listen, observe, document, and discuss with others, families in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. They observe and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them. Educators consider their own practices and approaches and the impacts they have on children, families, and others. Educators use this knowledge, gained through observing and discussing with others, and their professional judgment to create contexts to support children's learning, development, health, and well-being." (HDLH, p. 19). In support of this, we will undertake to deliver learning experiences to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-3*).

- 4) Play equipment, furnishings, and learning environments will be developmentally appropriate and safe for children. "Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways." (HDLH, p. 20). In support of this, we will ensure an indoor physical environment that will meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-4*).
- 5) A visual environment created through displays that are inclusive and are changed regularly to reflect the recent interests and artwork created by the children promotes well being. "Enabling children to develop a sense of belonging as part of a group is also a key contributor to their lifelong well-being. A sense of belonging is supported when each child's unique spirit, individuality, and presence are valued." (HDLH, p. 24). In support of this, we will create a visual environment through displays to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-5*).
- 6) Materials reflecting sensory, science and nature encourage children to explore through cause and effect experimentation and observation. Continual exposure to these materials and experiences allow children to learn more about their environments. "Optimal conditions for learning occur when we are fully engaged. For children, this happens in play that evolves from the child's natural curiosity – active play that allows children to explore with their bodies, minds, and senses, stimulating them to ask questions, test theories, solve problems, engage in creative thinking, and make meaning of the world around them. These investigations through play fuse intellect and feeling to help children make connections and develop the capacity for higher-order thinking." (HDLH, p. 35). In support of this, we will provide a sensory, Science and Nature program to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-6*).

- 7) Providing independent experiences through different mediums for children, creative art promotes self-expression and individuality. Regular expectations within the Daily Schedule and children's interests allow for the time to complete/extend the creative process. "Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children's learning, enhances their creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity" (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide an Art program to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-7*).
- 8) A cozy and inviting environment is created to encourage natural opportunities for language and literacy enjoyment. Children are able to retell stories and situations with the accessible props, thus providing opportunities to enhance storytelling experiences and language development. "Opportunities for children to explore language and literacy through play contribute to their development of strong language and cognitive abilities in both the short and the long term." (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide books and a program that utilizing them to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-8*).
- 9) Staff will expose children to various materials and accessories to promote natural opportunities for the development of language and literacy. Planning language and literacy experiences every day encourages the children to use and develop their vocabulary, their questioning skills and recall abilities. "Programs can best support emerging literacy skills by providing open-ended materials that foster imagination and symbolic play, including signs, symbols, and props that support print awareness in authentic contexts; by encouraging children to engage in play with words and sounds in song and rhyme; and by offering numerous opportunities for children to share books and stories." (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide language & literacy materials and a program that utilizes these to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-9*).
- 10) By exposing children to an assortment of cultural music and musical genres, staff is promoting skills such as language development, rhythm awareness, self-regulation and self-concept. "Creating and designing fuse together the cognitive, emotional, and physical domains – thinking, feeling, and doing. Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children's learning, enhances their creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity." (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide music

and accessories and program that utilizes these to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-10*).

- 11) We will promote daily active physical play learning experiences for children. "Through active play and physical exploration, children gain increasing levels of independence, learn to persevere and practice self-control, and develop a sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual mastery and competence." (HDLH, pp. 29-30). In support of this, we will deliver physical play learning experiences that meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-11*).
- 12) Provide access to an ample selection of props and blocks, with which children can build, create and explore concepts. Offer play that develops spatial awareness, manipulation of two-dimensional and three-dimensional materials and problem solving. Block play offers opportunities to work together, imagine, learn about cause and effect, patterning and sequencing that is child initiated. "Through play and inquiry, young children practice ways of learning and interacting with the world around them that they will apply throughout their lives. Problem solving and critical thinking, communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, initiative and citizenship are all capacities vital for success throughout school and beyond." (HDLH, p. 15). In support of this, we will offer Blocks and Construction materials and environment, and a program to engage in this environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-12*).
- 13) Provide children daily experiences with a multitude of materials and accessories to encourage a natural play environment that enhances cognitive development. Ensure spontaneous cognitive and manipulative learning experiences occur throughout the day. Planned and/or documented cognitive and manipulative experiences will lead children to higher learning, based on the children's observed cues and interests. "The focus is not on teaching a body of knowledge or a predetermined set of topics. Nor is it centered on children's achievement of a specific skill set. In the early years, programs are most effective when the content of learning is focused on supporting the development of strategies, dispositions, and skills for lifelong learning through play and inquiry." (HDLH, pg15). In support of this, we will offer cognitive and manipulative materials and environment, and a program to engage in this environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-13*).
- 14) Provide children an environment and accessories, in good condition, which promotes imaginative play with three or more role-playing possibilities. Prop boxes will be used to enhance the area and the program plan focus. Children

enhance their social interaction skills, emotional development and language extension through open-ended play. Mirrors in the dramatic area allow the children to see themselves from a different perspective "As children engage in various forms of social play and are supported to recognize the varied capabilities and characteristics of other children, they learn to get along with others; to negotiate, collaborate, and communicate; and to care for others." (HDLH, p. 24). In support of this, we will offer Dramatic Play accessories and environment, and a program to engage in this environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-14*).

- 15) Utilize guidelines for children to encourage safe, developmentally appropriate electronic media usage. Guidelines may include, but not exclusive to, frequency of use, duration, and sign-up sheet. Parents/guardians will be made aware in advance of media used in the classroom, and resources will be available for alternative learning opportunities. Monitor games brought from home or usage of Internet within the room. In support of this, we will ensure an electronic media usage environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-15*).
- 16) Plan for Compliance with the Regional Public Health procedures and practices. To ensure we will provide physical, instructional, and early learning and care supports for staff to meet or exceed the expectations for diapering and toileting routines described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-16*).
- 17) Make food and eating time positive learning experiences that promote social interactions and self-help skills. Staff will encourage children to have a healthy respect for food and eating. Use this time to engage and develop relationships with all of the children. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for meals and snack times described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-17*).
- 18) Ensure age and developmentally appropriate utensils, dishes and furnishings to enable safe and successful eating times. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for equipment required for eating and seating described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-18*).
- 19) Ensure crib or cot and bedding is hygienically maintained. Support staff to show flexibility with regards to the routine of the room and the cues of the children. Parents are engaged for guidance in sleep routines as appropriate. Pay attention to how we are meeting the needs of the children and what changes need to occur if we are not. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations

for cots and bedding described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-19*).

- 20) Ensure all materials, play equipment; furnishings and fixed fixtures are in good working order, clean and safe for the children and staff. Provide health and safety resources on topics that are relevant to the children and families at the centre. "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress" (HDLH, pg 30). In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for Health and Safety described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-20*).
- 21) Ensure compliance to Regional Public Health requirements for toy and equipment washing as part of providing a clean and sanitary environment. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for toys and play equipment washing described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-21*).
- 22) Ensure environment and practices for proper hand hygiene procedures that promote healthy living. Support the individual child's lifelong learning of proper hand hygiene. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for Hand Hygiene described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-22*).
- 23) Transitions are a challenge and an opportunity for children. Staff will have better awareness of the individual children's cues while children further develop their self-regulation and self-help skills at these times. Positive interactions during transitions provide a supportive learning environment. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Transitions described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-23*).
- 24) Ensure awareness at all times of the number and names of children that are in care. Ensure documentation on the Main Attendance Record accurately reflects the location of all children in care throughout the day. All arrival and departure times are accurately documented. Complete written verification after all staff and child transitions. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for attendance verification described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-24*).
- 25) Ensure all adults promote a positive and supportive approach to all interactions with all children, peers and other adults in the room. Role-model appropriate social skills throughout the day to support learning and growth. "When educators believe that all children have the right to participate and when

they use inclusive approaches, they are more likely to find ways to reduce barriers, understand how each child learns, and create environments and experiences that are meaningful and engaging" (HDLH, pg 36). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for a Positive Atmosphere described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-25*).

- 26) Staff operates as a team and with the engaged awareness to ensure supervision of the whole environment and safety of all. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for supervision of children described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-26*).
- 27) Support staff in their competencies as EL&C professionals in following the cues of children and providing interactions that encourage children to extend their learning with activities that interest them and choices that support their learning goals. "When children initiate experiences, generate ideas, plan, and problem-solve, make meaningful choices, and act spontaneously through play, they are more likely to be happy and get along well with others, to have lower levels of stress, and to be attentive and motivated to learn" (HDLH pg 35). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for fostering children's independence described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-27*).
- 28) Promote interaction with children in a way that fosters self-esteem. Support the children as they learn to self-regulate their emotions and to recognize empathy. "Studies show that when educators modeled and helped children express feelings, recognize others' feelings, and help others, children developed positive social skills such as perspective taking, empathy, and emotion regulation and were less likely to engage in problematic behaviour."(HDLH, pg 24-25). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for supporting the development of self-esteem in children described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-28*).
- 29) Promote use of developmentally appropriate and individually tailored strategies to support the behaviour management of the children. "... An approach that emphasizes listening, responding to, and building on child-initiated communication and conversation can be a more effective way to promote children's language acquisition and their development of social skills, empathetic understanding, and ability to pay attention" (HDLH, pg 41). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for behaviour guidance described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-29*).
- 30) Encourage staff to balance verbal/non-verbal interactions with children. Support them to provide experiences and opportunities to assist in extending the learning with all children. Help them play and role model positive social

interactions with the children. "When educators are aware of and able to understand and respond to the many "languages" children use to communicate, they give every child a "voice"" (HDLH, pg 41). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Supporting Development of Communication skills described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-30*).

- 31) Support staff to use observations, past knowledge and the cues of the children to extend learning and encourage opportunities to support the child's individual learning path. Support them to encourage the children to question, problem-solve and experiment. "Educators can gain a deeper understanding of children's developing skills and evolving learning approaches and can support new learning by collaborating with children in discovery and sustained, shared thinking" (HDLH, pg 35). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Extending Children's Learning described in the attached guideline (*preschool-AQI-guideline-31*).
- 32) Ensure good nutrition and safe food preparation. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Meal/Menu Planning, Centre Meal Requirements, Snack Planning and Requirements, Menu and/or Snack Adaptations, Food Substitutions, Preparation, Handling and Transportation of Food, and Health and Safety Kitchen and/or Food Preparation Area described in the attached guideline (*nutrition-AQI-guidelines-1-7*).
- 33) Ensure children are able to engage in outdoor play experiences safely. Physical play contributes to children's well being through sport play; children learn turn taking, communication, sharing, good sportsmanship as well as gross motor skills. Balls and equipment are in good condition and accessible to children "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them." (HDLH, pg 19). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Playground Supervision and Outdoor play space, equipment and learning material described in the attached guideline (*Playground-AQI-guidelines-1-4*).
- 34) Ensure collaboration with local community partners. "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them. It fosters a sense of belonging to the local community, the natural environment, and the larger universe of living things" (HDLH p19.). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for connecting and collaborating with local community and institutions described in the attached guideline (*working-together-AQI-guidelines-1-4*).

- 35) Support staff in continuous growth and professional learning. Research, theory and practice suggest that one of the things important to achieve a high quality program is to “provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice to support continuous professional learning and growth”. In support of this, we will capture as evidence, Our Practices and our efforts to **Being the best we can** (which follow).

Plans of Action for the School-age Program

NCCC’s action plan is designed to support the Centre’s mission statement and philosophy. The action plan is based on the City of Toronto’s quality assessment document AQI that all non-profit centres are required to adhere to. The Plans of Action listed below, are a means to execute the 11 key strategies required to support the Program Statement requirement from Section 46.3 in the Child Care and Early Years Licensing manual from the Ministry of Education.

- 1) Being aware of how the day is planned allows for consistency, self-regulation, minimizes negative behaviors and promotes general well being. "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children’s growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress." (HDLH, p. 30). In support of this, we will prepare and post a daily written and visual schedule to meet or exceed expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-1*).
- 2) An intentional plan for learning experiences that children will be exposed to, promotes the on-going learning opportunities and developmental growth for all children enrolled in the program. "As defined in Early Learning Framework, early years curriculum is the sum total of experiences, activities, and events that occur within an inclusive environment designed to foster children’s well-being, learning, and development and ensure meaningful participation for every child. It begins with an informed understanding of what children are capable of learning and how they learn effectively; it sets out goals for children’s learning and development, health, and well-being; and it provides direction for educators." (HDLH, p. 15). In support of this, we will prepare a Program Plan to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-2*).
- 3) Staff will use their observations, knowledge of child development and the children's cues to implement the activities and experiences described in the program plan. "Educators are reflective practitioners who learn about children using various strategies. They listen, observe, document, and discuss with others, families in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. They observe

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and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them. Educators consider their own practices and approaches and the impacts they have on children, families, and others. Educators use this knowledge, gained through observing and discussing with others, and their professional judgment to create contexts to support children's learning, development, health, and well-being." (HDLH, p. 19). In support of this, we will undertake to deliver activities and experiences to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-3*).

- 4) Play equipment, furnishings, and learning environments will be developmentally appropriate and safe for children. "Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways." (HDLH, p. 20). In support of this, we will ensure an indoor physical environment that will meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-4*).
- 5) A visual environment created through displays that are inclusive and are changed regularly to reflect the recent interests and artwork created by the children promotes well-being. "Enabling children to develop a sense of belonging as part of a group is also a key contributor to their lifelong well-being. A sense of belonging is supported when each child's unique spirit, individuality, and presence are valued." (HDLH, p. 24). In support of this, we will create a visual environment through displays to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-5*).
- 6) We will offer diversity in Play Equipment/Toys as it relates to race, culture, gender, age, language, family status and ability. "Developing policies, practices, and environments that respect and support inclusion (HDLH, p. 27) is one way to create a sense of belonging for children. In support of this, we will ensure an offering of play equipment and toys to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-6*).
- 7) Providing independent experiences through different mediums for children, creative art promotes self-expression and individuality. Regular expectations within the Daily Schedule and children's interests allow for the time to complete/extend the creative process. "Encouraging the creative expression of ideas, feelings, and interpretations using a variety of materials also helps solidify children's learning, enhances their creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills, and strengthens their memory and sense of identity" (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide Art/Sensory Activities, Equipment and Materials to

meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*School-age-AQI-guideline-7*).

- 8) A cozy and inviting environment is created to encourage natural opportunities for language and literacy enjoyment. Children are able to retell stories and situations with the accessible props, thus providing opportunities to enhance storytelling experiences and language development. "Opportunities for children to explore language and literacy through play contribute to their development of strong language and cognitive abilities in both the short and the long term." (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide books and accessories that meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-8*).
- 9) Staff will expose children to various language and listening opportunities for the development of language and literacy. Planning language and literacy experiences every day encourages the children to use and develop their vocabulary, their questioning skills and recall abilities. "Programs can best support emerging literacy skills by providing open-ended materials that foster imagination and symbolic play, including signs, symbols, and props that support print awareness in authentic contexts; by encouraging children to engage in play with words and sounds in song and rhyme; and by offering numerous opportunities for children to share books and stories." (HDLH, p. 42). In support of this, we will provide language & listening opportunities and materials and a program that utilizes these to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-9*).
- 10) Utilize guidelines for use of TV and Films to encourage safe, developmentally appropriate usage for children. Guidelines may include, but not exclusive to, frequency of use, duration, and content. Parents/guardians will be made aware in advance of usage in the classroom, and resources will be available for alternative learning opportunities. In support of this, we will ensure TV and Movie usage will meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-10*).
- 11) Utilize guidelines to encourage safe, developmentally appropriate computer usage for children. Guidelines may include, but not exclusive to, frequency of use, duration, and sign-up sheet. Monitor/supervise usage. In support of this, we will ensure a Computer Usage environment to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-11*).
- 12) Provide children an environment and accessories, in good condition, which promotes imaginative play with three or more role-playing possibilities. Prop boxes will be used to enhance the area and the program plan focus. Children

enhance their social interaction skills, emotional development and language extension through open-ended play. Mirrors in the dramatic area allow the children to see themselves from a different perspective "As children engage in various forms of social play and are supported to recognize the varied capabilities and characteristics of other children, they learn to get along with others; to negotiate, collaborate, and communicate; and to care for others." (HDLH, p. 24). In support of this, we will provide Dramatic Play Activities and Accessories to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-12*).

- 13) Provide access to an ample selection of props and blocks, with which children can build, create and explore concepts. Offer play that develops spatial awareness, manipulation of two-dimensional and three-dimensional materials and problem solving. Block play offers opportunities to work together, imagine, learn about cause and effect, patterning and sequencing that is child initiated. "Through play and inquiry, young children practice ways of learning and interacting with the world around them that they will apply throughout their lives. Problem solving and critical thinking, communication and collaboration, creativity and imagination, initiative and citizenship are all capacities vital for success throughout school and beyond." (HDLH, p. 15). In support of this, we will offer Blocks and Construction Activities and Accessories to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-13*).
- 14) Provide access to an ample selection of age-appropriate games and game accessories. "Programs are most effective when the content of learning is focused on supporting the development of strategies, dispositions, and skills for lifelong learning through play and inquiry" (HDLH p.15). In support of this, we will offer Games, Game Activities and Accessories to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-14*).
- 15) Materials reflecting, science and nature encourage children to explore through cause and effect experimentation and observation. Continual exposure to these materials and experiences allow children to learn more about their environments. "Optimal conditions for learning occur when we are fully engaged. For children, this happens in play that evolves from the child's natural curiosity – active play that allows children to explore with their bodies, minds, and senses, stimulating them to ask questions, test theories, solve problems, engage in creative thinking, and make meaning of the world around them. These investigations through play fuse intellect and feeling to help children make connections and develop the capacity for higher-order thinking." (HDLH, p. 35). In support of this, we will provide Science and Nature Experiences and Material to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*School-age-AQI-guideline-6*).

- 16) We will promote daily active physical play learning experiences for children. "Through active play and physical exploration, children gain increasing levels of independence, learn to persevere and practice self-control, and develop a sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual mastery and competence." (HDLH, pp. 29-30). In support of this, we will ensure Physical Activities/Active Play Indoors or Outdoors that meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-16*)
- 17) To "allow every child to participate and be challenged in meaningful ways" (HDLH p.29) in Physical Activities/Active Play Indoors or Outdoors, we will supply appropriate and ample active play equipment for the number of children enrolled. In support of this, we will ensure the supply of Active Play equipment meets or exceeds the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-17*).
- 18) Make food and eating time positive learning experiences that promote social interactions and self-help skills. Staff will encourage children to have a healthy respect for food and eating. Use this time to engage and develop relationships with all of the children. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for meals and snack times described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-18*).
- 19) Ensure utensils, dishes and furnishings to enable safe, and successful eating times. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for equipment required for eating and seating described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-19*).
- 20) Ensure accessible washroom facilities for all enrolled children. Ensure compliance with the Regional Public Health procedures and practices. In support of this we will provide washroom facilities, and supplies, and personal hygiene and body development related information resources to meet or exceed the expectations described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-20*).
- 21) Ensure all materials, play equipment; furnishings and fixed fixtures are in good working order, clean and safe for the children and staff. Provide health and safety resources on topics that are relevant to the children and families at the centre. "A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress" (HDLH, pg 30). In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for Health and Safety described in the attached guideline (*School-age-AQI-guideline-21*).

- 22) Ensure compliance to Regional Public Health requirements for toy and equipment washing as part of providing a clean and sanitary environment. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for toys and play equipment washing described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-22*).
- 23) Ensure environment and practices for proper hand hygiene procedures that promote healthy living. Support the individual child's lifelong learning of proper hand hygiene. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for Children's Hand Washing/Sanitizing Practices described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-23*).
- 24) Ensure environment and practices for proper hand hygiene by staff that promotes healthy living. In support of this we will meet or exceed the expectations for Staff Hand Washing/Sanitizing Practices described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-24*).
- 25) Transitions are a challenge and an opportunity for children. Staff will have better awareness of the individual children's cues while children further develop their self-regulation and self-help skills at these times. Positive interactions during transitions provide a supportive learning environment. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Transitions described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-25*).
- 26) Ensure awareness at all times of the number and names of children that are in care. Ensure documentation on the Main Attendance Record accurately reflects the location of all children in care throughout the day. All arrival and departure times are accurately documented. Complete written verification after all staff and child transitions. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Attendance Verification described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-26*).
- 27) Ensure all adults promote a positive and supportive approach to all interactions with all children, peers and other adults in the room. Role-model appropriate social skills throughout the day to support learning and growth. "When educators believe that all children have the right to participate and when they use inclusive approaches, they are more likely to find ways to reduce barriers, understand how each child learns, and create environments and experiences that are meaningful and engaging" (HDLH, pg 36). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for a Positive Atmosphere described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-27*).

- 28) Staff operates as a team and with the engaged awareness to ensure supervision of the whole environment and safety of all. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Supervision of Children described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-28*).
- 29) Support staff in their competencies as EL&C professionals in following the cues of children and providing interactions that encourage children to extend their learning with activities that interest them and choices that support their learning goals. "When children initiate experiences, generate ideas, plan, and problem-solve, make meaningful choices, and act spontaneously through play, they are more likely to be happy and get along well with others, to have lower levels of stress, and to be attentive and motivated to learn" (HDLH pg 35). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Fostering Children's Independence described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-29*).
- 30) Promote interaction with children in a way that fosters self-esteem. Support the children as they learn to self-regulate their emotions and to recognize empathy. "Studies show that when educators modeled and helped children express feelings, recognize others' feelings, and help others, children developed positive social skills such as perspective taking, empathy, and emotion regulation and were less likely to engage in problematic behaviour."(HDLH, pg 24-25). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Supporting the Development of Self-Esteem in Children described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-30*).
- 31) Promote use of developmentally appropriate and individually tailored strategies to support the behaviour management of the children. "... An approach that emphasizes listening, responding to, and building on child-initiated communication and conversation can be a more effective way to promote children's language acquisition and their development of social skills, empathetic understanding, and ability to pay attention" (HDLH, pg 41). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Behaviour Guidance described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-31*).
- 32) Staff will initiate and build on conversations with and between children: Staff will extend conversations with individual children as well as between children. "When educators are aware of and able to understand and respond to the many "languages" children use to communicate, they give every child a "voice"" (HDLH, pg 41). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Supporting Development of Communication Skills described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-32*).

- 33) Support staff to use observations, past knowledge and the cues of the children to extend learning and encourage opportunities to support the child's individual learning path. Support them to encourage the children to question, problem-solve and experiment. "Educators can gain a deeper understanding of children's developing skills and evolving learning approaches and can support new learning by collaborating with children in discovery and sustained, shared thinking" (HDLH, pg 35). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Extending Children's Learning described in the attached guideline (*school-age-AQI-guideline-33*).
- 34) Ensure good nutrition and safe food preparation. In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Meal/Menu Planning, Centre Meal Requirements, Snack Planning and Requirements, Menu and/or Snack Adaptations, Food Substitutions, Preparation, Handling and Transportation of Food, and Health and Safety Kitchen and/or Food Preparation Area described in the attached guideline (*nutrition-AQI-guidelines-1-7*).
- 35) Ensure children are able to engage in outdoor play experiences safely. Physical play contributes to children's well being through sport play; children learn turn taking, communication, sharing, good sportsmanship as well as gross motor skills. Balls and equipment are in good condition and accessible to children "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them." (HDLH, pg 19). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Playground supervision and Outdoor play space, equipment and learning material described in the attached guideline (*Playground-AQI-guidelines-1-4*).
- 36) Ensure collaboration with local community partners. "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them. It fosters a sense of belonging to the local community, the natural environment, and the larger universe of living things" (HDLH p19.). In support of this, we will meet or exceed the expectations for Connecting and Collaborating with Local Community and Institutions described in the attached guideline (*working-together-AQI-guidelines-1-4*).
- 37) Support staff in continuous growth and professional learning. Research, theory and practice suggest that one of the things important to achieve a high quality program is "provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice to support continuous professional learning and growth". In support of this, we will

capture as evidence, Our Practices and our efforts to **Being the best we can** (which follow).

Our Practice

The following practices implement, monitor, and evaluate action plans and continually improve our performance.

As we believe capturing and documenting our practice is a form of reinforcement of the learning process for educators, family and children, evidence of our practice will be captured in our documentation.

As educators who deliver high-quality early years programs, we know that we are never done. Our commitment to continuous improvement will be achieved by management policies and practices that embrace the program statement.

1. All new staff on hiring, and all existing staff (annually) will acknowledge and review:
 - a. This program statement document
 - b. All relevant and attached guidelines.
2. Parent survey will be conducted annually to assess performance against the 11 key requirements.
3. Internal Rating (AQI) for each Plan of Action will be conducted annually for each program.
4. Undertake monthly staff meeting. Always include agenda item to discuss performance against the program statement and plan for improvement for next month.
5. Undertake quarterly management/board meetings. Always include agenda item to discuss performance against the program statement and plan for improvement for next period.
6. Gather together with staff annually to review and reflect on our performance and capture outcomes and set goals for the next period.
7. Share "performance outcomes and goals review with Board/Management and document and incorporate their feedback.
8. Each monthly staff meeting will, on a rotation basis, include on the agenda, one of the 11 key strategies to create the conditions promoted by the HDLH document. Staff will discuss and reflect on current practices against this strategy, and any opportunities for improvement will be captured.
9. Budget a professional development investment for each staff and align the professional development with the program statement needs.

10. The annual employee performance review will include a self-assessment of the 11 key strategies to create the conditions promoted by the HDLH document. Staff will annotate the self-assessment with an example of each and identify goals for improvement for the next year.

NCCC Prohibited Practices

- Corporal punishment of the child
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a chair or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself, or someone else, and is used as only the last resort and only until a risk of injury is no longer imminent
- Locking the exits of the child care Centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at/or used directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or under mind his/her self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will

**NORTHLEA COMMUNITY CHILD CARE
APPENDIX A- NCCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2017-2018**

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