

**City of Peterborough Municipal Child Care &  
School Age Program Family Handbook 2025-2026**



## Welcome

Thank you for choosing a Municipal Child Care Program where children play, learn, and grow together. We are delighted to work with you to provide your child a fulfilling and enriching experience.

The City of Peterborough operates 2 full day child care programs and two school-age programs. Pearson and Peterborough Child Care programs offer care for children 15 months to 5 years and are open from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday to Friday on a year-round basis. The School-Age programs provide interesting and fun before and after-school programming for children 4 to 12 years of age. The programs are located at Edmison Heights and Westmount Public schools and operate from September to June.

The Child Care Planning Manager oversees the Municipal Child Care and School Age Programs. Each Program has a supervisor responsible for the daily operation of the Program and an Assistant Supervisor (Designate) who is available when the supervisor is away.

This handbook provides important information that you'll want to know about our programs and the care we offer.

If you have any questions or you would like to chat about your child's progress, we'd be happy to meet with you. Please let us know what time works best for you and we will do our best to meet your needs.

Families who have internet access may want to visit the Children's Services website where there are many useful links to informative child care sites.

You can find us at [www.peterborough.ca](http://www.peterborough.ca).

Once again, welcome to our program!

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## **Program Statement**

### **Our Vision**

Our vision is for all families to have access to high quality child care and early learning that fosters success for every child.

### **Mission**

The Municipal Child Care Program is committed to providing high quality early learning environments for young children. We value all children and their families and we are committed to the development of strong partnerships and deeper connections to ensure a safe, nurturing, quality program that encourages the growth and development of each individual child. We recognize the competence and capabilities of children, families and educators and create environments that support a sense of well-being, belonging, engagement and expression. Our programs are responsive to each child as a unique individual.

### **Guiding Principles**

Our guiding principles establish the standard of practice for the program and guide staff in their day-to-day work.

- Children are provided a nurturing and intellectually stimulating indoor and outdoor environment which meets their social, emotional, and developmental needs.
- Our learning environment is based on observation through play and the key principles described in *How Does Learning Happen?* and provides child-initiated, spontaneous inquiries and planned experiences throughout the day.
- We encourage ongoing communication and participation between educators, families, and community partners in making informed decisions about their child's development and well-being.
- We are committed to supporting a positive environment that promotes effective communication, teamwork and mutual respect and trust among the children, families, and educators.
- We believe that our experience and the competence of our educators are our most valuable resources.
- We value the diversity of our community and believe that our program must be offered in an inclusive and culturally sensitive manner.
- We provide well-balanced, healthy snacks and lunches to ensure that all children have the nutrition they require to function at their best throughout the day.

## **Partnerships with Families**

Our educators work hard to establish and maintain warm, supportive, and responsive relationships with each child and their family. Genuine efforts are made by the educators to understand your needs as a family, your cultural practices and preferences and the goals you have for your child. Our educators will work closely with you to assist your child to settle into the program successfully.

We encourage families to visit the program and participate in activities as your schedule will allow. This provides you with the opportunity to see what your child is working on and time to talk to your child's educator about his/her progress. Through the year, we strive to provide a variety of opportunities for families to engage with other families and staff in a social context.

Our educators provide up-to-date information about the program and/or upcoming events through daily use of the Parent Communication App, Storypark. . Through the Storypark App, educators will post regular updates on your child's day which may include photo's, artwork, voice recordings, newsletters, links to surveys, requests for items and special event announcements. Families will be invited to start their Storypark journey prior to their child's first day so that they can begin to share information about their child with the educator's. The educator's will also share some information/photos of themselves and the program so that families can prepare their child for their first day. Storypark is a wonderful way to stay connected with your child's educator and the happenings within the program. Families will learn more about this App when they begin the Registration process. General information such as newsletters, special event announcements and family fee invoices are sent electronically to all families who provide an email address if you opt out of using the Storypark App. . Hard copies are made available to families without email. You will also be provided with family-teacher meetings and family education nights as requested.

## **We Want to Hear from You**

As a family of one of our programs, your voice is important. The ideas and suggestions that come from our families help us to make our programs the best they can be. On alternating years, we ask families to tell us about their experiences with us. The results from our bi-annual family satisfaction survey help guide our goals and provide families with a way to express their happiness and concerns.

You are also encouraged to share any concerns you have about our program or your child's progress. When concerns do arise, we will make every effort to respond to them promptly and with understanding. We will ensure that there is respectful exploration of the issue and consideration for possible solutions will be discussed with you. We hope

that you feel comfortable bringing concerns to your supervisor as they arise so we can work on solutions immediately.

If you feel that you or your child has been treated improperly, we ask that you talk about the situation with the person and/or supervisor so it can be resolved. If you are not able to do so or if you are not satisfied with the response of the informal process, then you can submit a formal written complaint to the Child Care Planning Manager within a reasonable time of the incident (preferably within five (5) working days). To assist the Child Care Planning Manager in fully understanding the complaint, the individual must complete a *Client Complaint Form*, which includes a description of the incident; the names of educator(s) involved; the names of witnesses, if any; and the steps already taken to try to resolve the complaint. Families or individuals may ask a friend or advocate of their choosing to help complete the form. For more information about how to complete a formal complaint, please visit the Social Services website at [www.peterborough.ca](http://www.peterborough.ca). You will find the process on the Customer Service page.

The Child Care Planning Manager will provide written reply within five (5) working days to confirm that the complaint has been received. The Child Care Planning Manager will thoroughly investigate the matter, normally within thirty (30) working days from the receipt of the written complaint. When the investigation has been completed, the Child Care Planning Manager will advise the family or individual of the findings.

The Child Care Planning Manager may recommend actions to resolve the situation such as a dispute resolution meeting between those involved. If an educator is found to have contravened the City of Peterborough *Code of Conduct*, then appropriate actions will be taken to address the incident such as training, reprimand or discipline up to and including termination. Specific details of any disciplinary action taken will not be provided to any individual.

Only complaints related directly to employee conduct fall under this complaint procedure.

Complaints about program specific issues must be addressed first with the program supervisor. In the event that the concern remains unresolved, the family or individual may submit a formal written complaint to the Child Care Planning Manager who will follow a similar process in order to resolve the issue.

## **Program Development**

Our play-based learning spaces are integral to our view of children as competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. Our educators model and encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way with each other. We work to support their ability to self-regulate by responding in a warm, sensitive manner and

provide cozy, calm spaces that allow children space and time to play together or on their own.

Educators create environments that foster exploration of the world through spontaneous child initiated and planned activities. We strive to provide a balance of independent and group play both indoors and outdoors throughout the day. Educators provide opportunities for active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry. We plan with the understanding that each child's development is unique and therefore our activities and program schedule allow for individual choice and flexibility throughout the day.

Educators create play-based environments that provide great opportunities for children to learn. Dramatic play, (i.e., playing house or school) encourages children to use their imagination and problem-solving skills. These skills will help them learn to read, write, and communicate. Activities that encourage children to pretend by using objects in their play, (i.e., when children play "store" and use objects such as shopping lists and price tags), they learn that the letters and numbers on these objects have meaning.

The program plans that are posted in the centre offer more detail about the events and activities in your child's room. Families can use this information to become more involved in their child's learning by sharing special books, pictures, music, or customs. When you participate in the program with your child, the whole room benefits. We welcome and encourage you to offer suggestions, resources and/or your skills to enhance the program.

Our programs focus on the foundations for learning outlined in the provincial document, *How Does Learning Happen?* We believe these foundations need to be part of every day to help children learn and develop in a healthy way.



## Foundations

### Belonging

#### Goals for Children

Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.

#### Our Program will:

Cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.

### Well-Being

#### Goals for Children

Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.

#### Our Program will:

Nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self.

### Engagement

#### Goals for Children

Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.

#### Our Program will:

Provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.

### Expression

#### Goals for Children

Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

#### Our Program will:

Foster communication and expression in all forms.

### When developing the program, our Educators will:

- Educators plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans.
- Plan activities based on observations and the children's interests.
- Provide both planned and spontaneous inquiries that can be conducted in a variety of group sizes or one on one.
- Offer open ended materials that are displayed in a pleasing manner to encourage

investigations and questions and provide opportunities for children to test their theories.

- Offer a play area that encourages different kinds of play, such as: construction, role playing, movement, problem solving, discovering, communicating, creating, imagining, reading, writing, space, and measurement.
- Be thoughtful about the playroom setup by planning the use of space to encourage positive relationships, communication, and interaction between children as well as children and educators at the child's developmental and physical level.
- Plan a variety of outdoor activities that are appealing and developmentally appropriate that allow each child to be challenged and to succeed.
- Observe and record the children's learning through various forms of documentation such as learning stories, art, and photographs.

Program plans and documentation are posted on the communication boards and all around the room for parents to see and read. We encourage families to share special skills, family celebrations, heritage, and cultural traditions with us. Our educators will work with you to include your special skills and traditions into the program.

### **Our Expert Team Who Care for Your Child**

Our educators all hold a College diploma in Early Childhood Education (ECE) where possible or a related field of study. Those that are ECEs are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. The College is a professional self-regulatory organization of ECE's formed to protect the public interest and focused on quality and standards in the practice of early childhood education. All educators are responsible for maintaining and enhancing their professional skills and knowledge and engage in continuous professional learning throughout the year. Learning opportunities are made available through workshops, networks, conferences, book studies and team meetings. Educators work in collaboration with their supervisor to identify their professional learning needs, set annual goals and work to achieve the goals over the year. They are encouraged to share new information and resources with their teams. Educators are also engaged in broader community networks with other child care professionals and may hold memberships in provincial organizations. Each child care and school age program has an assigned dietary staff who plans a nutritious menu of home-cooked snacks and meals for the children. Dietary staff work closely with Nutritionists at our local Health Unit, are trained in food safety and all kitchens are inspected regularly by the local Health Department.

As a part of our ongoing commitment to professional development, our educator team

will participate in an annual Professional Development Day. This day will be determined yearly and will see our programs closed to families on this specific date. Families will be advised of this closure with a minimum of three months notice.

### **Students and Volunteers**

We believe that students and volunteers contribute significantly to our programs and to the education of your children. For this reason, we provide placement opportunities for college/ university students and for volunteers throughout the year.

In accordance with our Supervising Students and Volunteers Policy, these individuals are never left alone with the children under any circumstance and are supervised by our qualified staff at all times.

### **Guiding Children's Behaviour-Setting the Stage for Positive Environments**

We believe that children have the right to quality care which is safe and healthy and provides learning opportunities that promote their growth and development.

By providing acceptance, clear guidance and genuine care, the children are supported in the process of learning how to work together to build ideas and solve problems.

Appropriate guidance of the children's behaviour occurs in an environment where a trusting and caring relationship has been established between the educator and child.

Educators support a child's sense of well-being while providing opportunities for the child to learn appropriate ways to interact with others. Educators model and encourage positive interactions and incorporate feelings into conversations to support the development of the child's emotional health and self-confidence.

Families, educators and children are expected to behave in a safe manner with others. We will strive to meet the child where they are at developmentally using the following methods;

- Set up an environment that is reflective of the children's interest to offer engaging opportunities
- Use re-direction as soon as possible to mitigate unsafe behaviours
- Provide clear choices so that the individual maintains a sense of control over their options
- Ensure that the individual is aware of what the results of their actions could be
- Develop clear boundaries/guidelines for the children in the program
- Model the behaviours that we want to see in the program
- Provide choices wherever possible and encourage the children to make appropriate decisions for themselves

- Prepare the environment and be ready to be flexible and willing to change plans as necessary
- Recognize what behaviours can be safely ignored or quietly redirected and put more focus on the desired behaviours
- Reinforce desired behaviours and encourage positive choices

It is our priority to create an environment where all children have fun, feel safe and enjoy being in our program, and in order to ensure this happens we follow these basic guidelines;

- All bodies must be safe
- All feelings must be safe
- All environments and equipment must be safe

The following behaviours are not acceptable and may result in immediate actions such as removal from program for the remainder of the day..

- Endangering the health and safety of children and/or educators and volunteers
- Using vulgarity, profanity, or obscenity frequently
- Leaving the program without permission
- Refusing to follow directions as set out by the educator and/or supervisor in the program
- Stealing and/or damaging the City's, School or personal property

If there are ongoing incidents which cause concern for the safety of participants and programs, we require parental support and co-operation to work towards a resolution. Each child will be managed individually based on the situation and needs of the family and/or program.

Educators along with supervisors will make every effort to support the child and redirect behaviours prior to notifying parents that there are concerns. Adjustments for programming, schedules, toys and equipment will be accommodated wherever possible. If the educators are unable to support the behaviours, and there continues to be disruption to the program, they will then involve the family.

Behavioural concerns that require family involvement will be documented on an Incident Report, discussed and shared with the parent and placed in the child's file.

Where necessary, the program may require Special Needs Resourcing to

support a child, group of children in the room or to support the group as a whole. Families may be required to sign an agreement for the program to receive this support. Failure to agree to the added support may result in the loss of your child care space within the program.

Considerations for ongoing or severe concerns:

- Documented conversation with the family
- Calls to family requiring immediate pick-up for remainder of day where there are immediate risks to safety
- Consideration for additional outside supports may be given as an option to further support the needs of the child in addition to the supports already in place
- Continued concerns of safety may result in the termination of child care space with two weeks written notice given

Every effort will be made to keep all children in our programs according to their schedules before resorting to the above-mentioned considerations. Cooperation of the family is mandatory in situations where safety is a concern for anyone.

Shared Consent between the School and the program MUST accompany all registrations for the School Age Programs. Our School Age Programs are well versed in the Safe School's Act and accordingly will work in collaboration with the School Boards. In situations that result in suspension from School will also result in suspension from the City of Peterborough's Programs.

Under Ontario Regulation 221/11, "third party operator must report to a school principal where a pupil of a school in the board may have engaged in an activity for which suspension or expulsion must be considered, that these employees must report the matter to the school's principal and this may result in suspension or expulsion of the student."

If any child is removed from program the Child Care Planning Manager will also be notified.

### **Prohibited Practices**

The following practices are not allowed in any of our programs:

- Corporal Punishment of a child

- Physical restraint of a child, such as confining the child to a chair or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting him/herself or someone else and is used only as a last resort and only until the 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 unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the centre's emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity, or self-worth
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Prohibited practices and behaviour guidance are discussed at educator team meetings, and consistent behavior guidance techniques are agreed upon. All educators are monitored regularly to ensure that children are always treated respectfully in a supportive way. Any employee, student or volunteer who engages in a prohibited practice will face immediate disciplinary action.

## **Administration**

The supervisor or designate will complete all admissions of new children. When a space becomes available, the supervisor will contact the next family on the wait list based on priority guidelines, offer the space, and arrange for a first visit to the program. Before a child begins, all required Enrollment Forms must be completed, signed by the family, and returned to the supervisor.

## **Getting Started**

You want the best for your child and so do we! You can help us by:

- Keeping us informed about changes in your child care needs.
- Asking questions about your child's learning and care; or about any of the guidelines included in this handbook.
- Telling us how we are doing, so we can improve the services we provide.

- Letting us know when you need other resources or supports to help you with your child.

## **Wait Lists and Priority Guidelines**

Access will be based on availability of space in each Municipal Child Care Program. At no time will a fee be charged to place a child's name on our waitlists. If you wish to determine where you are on the waitlist, please call the program to inquire. It is our commitment to ensure that families on our wait list are treated fairly with respect to offering available child care spaces. We respect and support the child care requirements of all families in accordance with our *Program Statement*. Families that have been placed on the program wait list will be contacted when their name comes to the top of the list, and a space is available. All contact regarding the wait list will be made by email or by phone. The supervisor or designate will make two attempts to contact a family before their name is taken off the wait list.

Any family who declines a space but wishes to stay on the wait list is placed in a holding file and is not re-contacted by the program. Once the family reconnects with the program, their file will be reactivated.

Families are removed from the wait list when one of the following situations arises:

- Once their child is no longer age-appropriate to attend our program.
- If they do not return the phone call requesting confirmation of interest in a space.
- When they are not able to be contacted by phone because the phone number is out of service.
- If they have moved and have not left a forwarding phone number.
- If they ask to be removed.

## **Priority Guidelines**

**1st Priority:** Children that have siblings already enrolled in the program

**2nd priority:** Returning families

**3rd Priority:** New families

The Municipal Child Care Program reserves the right to decline a space to a returning family whose account is in arrears and to close the waiting list at any time.

## **Dropping Off and Picking Up Your Child**

When you arrive in the morning, help/have your child remove their outdoor clothing and accompany them to the classroom where the program is taking place. This is a good opportunity for you to tell the educator about any special events in your child's life.

In order for children to fully benefit from our childcare program, children need to arrive

no later than 9:30am in a full-day program and at least 20 minutes before the school bell in a school age program. If you know that you will be arriving later than this, you are required to call the program to inform them of your intended arrival time. If the childcare program has not received a phone call by 10am they will begin contacting families. If educators have not had the family contact by 10am they will begin by contacting the family via the method of communication, they usually use. If there is no response, they will then reach out via another communication method followed by calling the parent/guardians place of employment and the emergency contact.

When late arrivals become a pattern, the supervisor may refuse care on a late arrival day. The Supervisor will then discuss possible solutions with you so care can continue.

Most families have a regular time that they pick up their children. If you need to pick up your child earlier or later than usual, please advise the educators in advance. When you pick up your child, please make sure the educators know that you are leaving with your child so they can mark the attendance accordingly.

If you cannot pick up your child, please arrange for someone else to do so. We need a note from you describing who will be picking up your child. For your child's safety, we will not release them to anyone who is not listed on the *Enrollment Form* or without your written permission.

When arranging for someone other than yourself to pick up your child, please provide us with the name and address of the person, as well as the time they will pick up your child. We will ask for identification before letting your child leave with anyone other than you so please ensure that they bring photo ID with them.

All parents and guardians listed on the *Enrollment Form* have the right to pick up their child. Our educators and supervisors are prohibited from denying parental access to their child(ren) unless legal documents that outline a custody agreement have been provided. Please inform the supervisor or designate about custody arrangements and provide copies of court documents pertaining to your child.

### **Late Pick Up**

Peterborough and Pearson Childcare close promptly at 5:30 pm. All families are required to arrive to pick up their child no later than 5:25 to allow for departure by 5:30. At 5:25 educators will call families that have not yet arrived to ensure they are enroute. Families who know they will be late due to emergencies or unforeseen circumstances and have called the program to inform them of their late arrival will not be charged a late penalty. Families failing to depart with their children by 5:35 p.m. will be asked to sign a late book, indicating the date, the time of departure, and the amount of the fine owing. Failure to depart the program by 5:35 p.m. will incur a fine of \$25.00. Failure to depart the program by 5:45 p.m. will incur a fine of \$50.00. For more information on staff



procedures when families fail to arrive, please speak with your program supervisor.

School Age programs close promptly at 6:00pm. All families are required to arrive to pick up their child no later than 5:55 pm to allow for departure by 6:00pm. At 5:25 educators will call families that have not yet arrived to ensure they are enroute.

Families who know they will be late due to emergencies or unforeseen circumstances and have called the program to inform them of their late arrival will not be charged a late penalty.

Families failing to depart with their children by 6:00 p.m. will be asked to sign a late book, indicating the date, the time of departure, and the amount of the fine owing. Failure to depart the program by 6:05pm will incur a fine of \$25.00. Failure to depart the program by 6:15 p.m. will incur a fine of \$50.00. Under no circumstance will a child be released from the childcare to walk home alone. For more information on educator procedures when families fail to arrive on time, please speak with your program supervisor.

## **Emergency Management**

It is very important that the educators at the programs are able to contact you or your designated alternate in the case of an emergency. Please notify us immediately of any changes in your home contact phone numbers or work/school information. If for any reason you will not be at your regular place of work/school, please let us know where we can reach you or provide us with an alternative contact. The municipal child care programs have emergency management policies and procedures regarding how families will be notified if an emergency occurs.

In the event of an emergency which requires evacuation of the program, arrangements have been made to take the children to either City Hall at 500 George St (Pearson Child Care Centre) King Edward Park and then Transported to City Hall at 500 George St (Peterborough Day Care Centre), Adam Scott School (Edmison Heights) or St. Teresa's School (Westmount) dependent their program location. Every attempt will be made to notify you that an evacuation has occurred and where your child can be picked up.

Upon the conclusion of an Emergency Evacuation or Lock Down procedure, employees, students, volunteers, children, and parents will be given an opportunity to discuss the situation and their concerns and feelings of distress. If warranted a counsellor will be employed to help debrief staff and families.

## **Security for Full Day Programs**

Each program has its own security system in place to keep the children as safe as possible. Families will be given the program's access code on the first day of

enrollment. In the event you forget the code, there is a bell located next to the keypad for your convenience. To help us maintain an optimum level of security, we ask you NOT to give out the access code to older children or those people authorized to pick up your child.

We also ask that children do not push the accessible door buttons or enter the access code into the keypad. In our program, the educators are responsible for opening our doors. We have found that children who are given permission to open our doors and enter security codes will open them when we are not ready, and therefore their safety and the safety of others is put at risk.

School Age Programs will follow protocols put forth by their school and will be communicated with the families and children prior to their first day of care.

### **Collection of Personal Information and Confidentiality**

Information about your child and family is gathered for the sole use of the Municipal Child Care Program and follows the guidelines as set out by Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).

Information is kept in confidence and released only with written family consent. As a family, you have access to your child's file in the presence of an authorized Municipal Child Care Program representative. This file is the property of the City of Peterborough Child Care Program.

If it is necessary to provide information to an outside agency, written permission from the family must be obtained, except in the case of Children's Aid Society or where a court order has been issued.

Our educators learn about the children in the program through observations. Part of their process is to take pictures of the children while they play, to support their documentation. On occasion, these pictures are used in our program displays and for marketing our program to the public. Your permission was granted through the consent form that was signed at enrollment. You may change your consent at any time. Please talk to the supervisor to make any changes.

### **Health, Hygiene and Safety**

#### **Outdoor Play and Field Trips**

Children are required to be outdoors for a period of time weather permitting. We use outdoor play time as an opportunity to extend learning. During our outdoor time we provide both planned and spontaneous activities for your child to enjoy. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the season.

If your child is not well enough to participate in outdoor play, they should remain at

home until they are feeling better. While we are concerned for your child's well-being, we are not able to keep ill children indoors with an educator and meet the required adult-to-child ratio mandated by the Child Care and Early Years Act. Your cooperation is necessary to ensure the safe supervision of all children in our care.

### **Spontaneous Outings and Field Trips**

Spontaneous outings can provide a wonderful opportunity for children by enhancing the program. Outings may include picnics in the park, a visit to a local grocery store or a neighborhood walk.

We require written permission for your child to participate in spontaneous outings as part of our enrollment package. On occasion we may plan a special field trip outside of the neighborhood. For these outings you will be asked to sign an additional permission form for that trip specifically.

### **Nutrition**

Each program has a designated Dietary Educator who plans a nutritious menu, consisting of am and pm snack daily for school age programs and prepares a nutritional lunch and two snacks daily for full day programs according to Canada's Food Guide, the Child Care and Early Years Act and the Municipal Child Care Program nutritional guidelines and principles.

The menus are posted in each program for a two-week period and are planned to meet a child's daily food and portion requirements. Foods that offer no nutritional value will not be offered to the children unless previously approved by the supervisor. We do not serve nuts or products which may contain nuts on our menus.

Meal and snack time provide opportunities for children to socialize while establishing good eating habits and appreciation for a variety of food. Educators are respectful of the children's cues for hunger and/or fullness and food preferences. The children are encouraged to serve themselves and explore all foods that are provided however, educators will not force food or withhold it under any circumstances.

In an effort to promote supportive healthy eating environments for the children in our programs, we have adopted the following Healthy Eating practices.

We are committed to:

**Offering a wide variety of foods and beverages from Canada's Food Guide every day** - vegetables and fruit, whole grains, milk/alternatives, meat/alternatives, protein foods

**Making water available throughout the day** - We make drinking water freely available so children can serve themselves

**Supporting Healthy Eating** - Educators join the children at the table for meals and snack and role model healthy eating. Children will serve themselves where possible

**Nutrition Education** - We provide training opportunities for educators and families on nutrition. Educators also engage families in conversations and activities related to nutrition such as planting vegetable gardens and the value of introducing new foods.

### **Special Dietary Requirements/Allergies**

If your child has any special dietary requirements or allergies, we ask that you identify them on your child's Enrollment Form so our Dietary Educators can take them into consideration when planning the menus. Our Educators will work with you to meet the special dietary needs of your child and may request that you supply certain items. We ask families without restrictions not to bring in food from outside the program. We do this to be sure all food products are free from allergens that may be life threatening to the children attending our programs. Special circumstances can be arranged. Talk to your program supervisor to discuss alternatives.

### **Naps and Rest Time for Toddler and Preschool Age Children**

The nap/rest time offered at the Program is two hours long in accordance to the Child Care and Early Years Act. Children are welcome to bring a cuddly toy/special blanket from home for rest time. Children who do not sleep, rest on their cot for 1 hour (to give the sleepers time to relax without disruption). After this time, a child who does not sleep may engage in a quiet activity set up by the educator or may be taken outside for extra active play.

Each child has their own cot with bedding that is changed and laundered weekly. Cots are disinfected at the same time the bedding is changed.

### **Toilet Learning for Toddler and Preschool Children**

Every child is different when it comes to toileting needs. A child needs to show signs of toilet readiness before learning can begin. Here are some signs your child may show to indicate they are ready to begin toilet learning:

- Dry diaper for three hours or more or dry overnight.
- Child tells you they need "to go".
- Shows an awareness of "going to the bathroom".
- May ask to have a diaper changed when wet or soiled.
- Child can pull their own pants up and down.
- Child wants to sit on the toilet or potty seat.

Please discuss your child's toilet learning needs with her/his educator if required. For your child to have ongoing success, it is important to work on a routine that is the same

both at home and at the Program. We wish to make your child's experience as secure, reassuring, and positive as possible. If there are any routines or articles that will help your child through these kinds of transitions, please talk with your child's educator about your ideas.

## **A Clean and Organized Program**

Our programs are responsible to support children's health and well-being. Good hygiene and regular cleaning and disinfecting of toys and equipment help limit the spread of infection and illness. Educators routinely monitor toys, furniture, and equipment to ensure they are clean and in good working order.

Daily routines include education, modeling and encouraging of regular hand washing, sanitary clean up and implementation of universal precaution guidelines with respect to bodily fluids.

## **When Your Child is Sick**

Our program recognizes its responsibility to promote a learning environment that is safe for all. The health and well-being of all children is of paramount importance to enable them to be successful learners and to be the best that they can be.

Even with a great deal of cleaning and disinfecting, children will get sick and will need to spend time away from the program in order to feel better. When your child is not well enough to fully take part in our program, we ask that you keep them at home during their most contagious period. A child who does not have the energy or desire to become involved in their usual activities at the program is often a sign they are not well enough to be in our program.

Educators will routinely monitor the children's health upon arrival in our program each day. If your child is not well upon arrival, the educator will ask you to take your child home. If your child becomes ill while in our program, he/she will be made comfortable in a supervised location and the family will be notified immediately and asked to pick the child up as soon as possible.

If your child is showing the following signs of illness, we ask that you call your program to let them know that your child will not be attending that day.

## **When to Keep Your Child at Home**

- Fever - Children with a temperature over 38 degrees Celsius or 100 degrees Fahrenheit, with behaviour changes, should stay home from child care. If you need to give your child medication to bring the fever down, they should stay home until their fever has been gone for 24 hours.
- Vomiting - If a child vomits more than once in a 24 hour period, or if the child who vomits shows signs of discomfort, then families need to keep him/her at home. One episode of vomiting, followed by active play may not be a problem, but

should be monitored. Children are to stay home for 48 hours after their last incident.

- Diarrhea - Unexplained and repeated stools that cannot be contained in a diaper or controlled by an older child should be monitored at home. Children are to stay home for 48 hours after their last incident.
- Cold - with fever, runny nose, and eyes, coughing and sore throat. Any noticeable changes in behaviour.
- Discharge from ears or eyes
- Headache and stiff neck
- Unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Difficulty with breathing (respiratory illnesses)
- Sore throat and difficulty swallowing
- Rash with a fever or other signs of illness

### **When Your Child Can Return to the Program**

When your child is feeling better, which means:

- they have been free of fever-reducing medication for 24 hours or
- have been on antibiotics for a minimum of 24 hours or
- the recommended amount of time prescribed by a medical professional or
- 48 hours after the last incident of vomit or diarrhea

### **Communicable Diseases**

Communicable diseases spread from one person to another or from an animal to a person. The spread often happens by airborne viruses or bacteria, but also through blood or other bodily fluid. The terms infectious and contagious are also used to describe communicable disease.

Some infections can be quite serious for children. While other diseases may not pose a serious threat to children, our educators could be at risk if they are pregnant or have trouble fighting illnesses. We ask that if your child has a communicable disease, you will take the appropriate precautions and get the medical help your child needs to help them feel better. The program will notify you if your child begins to show signs and symptoms while in the program.

The educators in your child's room have an up-to-date resource book on the variety of childhood illnesses that your child may contract. This book lists signs and symptoms as well as information on whether your child should stay home or can come to child care.

This resource book was developed to help both families and educators understand when a child is contagious and when they are not. Please feel free to ask your child's educator to see the resource book. For up-to-date information, you can visit the Canadian Pediatric Society's website or Peterborough Public Health at [www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca](http://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca)

### **Giving Medication at the Program**

Childhood is mixed with both robust health and energy as well as times of illness, infections and diagnosed disorders. We believe that children who need to take medication for the promotion of health or are recovering from an illness/infection should be welcomed and included.

All medication will be administered according to the doctor's instructions as authorized by the family on the *Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form*. There must be clear directions on the dispensing of medication. These instructions must come from the label on the prescribed medication.

#### **Guidelines**

- Families must fill out the **Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form**, including name of drug, dosage, times to administer, symptoms and a family member's signature.
- All medications must be in the original container, clearly labeled with child's name, name of drug, dosage, date of purchase and instructions for storage and administration.
- Families are required to hand any medications directly to educators to ensure secure storage.
- Educators must ensure medication is properly stored and recorded.
- Educators will record each time medication is given and will follow the directions exactly as printed. Appropriate records will be kept using the *Authorization for the Administration of Medication Form* and kept along with the child's confidential information.

### **Immunizations**

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 requires that before admission to a child care program, families must provide their child's record of immunization or a letter of exemption (form approved by the Ministry of Education). We are also required under the Health Protection and Promotion Act to report current and any additional



immunizations to the local Public Health Department.

School Age children are not required to provide immunization information as they will be required to share this with the school.

### **Injuries at the Program**

While our educators take every measure to ensure your child is safe while in our care, accidents do happen. Program educators will ensure any necessary medical assistance is delivered promptly. In the case of normal childhood accidents, the educators will apply the required first aid. This will be noted in the program's log book, an injury report will be completed, and a copy given to the family. In cases where the child may require a physician's attention (e.g., stitches to close an open wound) you will be contacted to pick-up your child to seek medical attention.

If you or your emergency contact is not able to pick up your child, or the injury is deemed an emergency, the child will be transported to the hospital. To ensure your child's safety, only an ambulance or taxi will be used as transportation. If you are not able to be with your child, an educator will always be with your child to supervise and comfort. You will be informed by telephone immediately except in the event where the Children's Aid Society (CAS) has been called. In this situation, the program will follow the direction of CAS.

Any life-threatening accident or injury to a child is considered a Serious Occurrence and will be reported to the Ministry of Education within 24 hours and a copy will be reviewed with the family. A **Serious Occurrence Notification Form** will be completed and posted to inform families about what has occurred in that program. Universal Precautions for handling bodily fluids will be practiced at all times.

### **Child Abuse**

Section 68(3) of the Child and Family Services Act states that:

"Despite the provisions of any other act, a person (individuals who perform professional or official duties with respect to children)... who, in the course of her or his professional duties, has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be suffering from or may have suffered abuse, shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a society." (Child Protection, Children's Aid Society)

Educators are therefore legally obligated to take a child's allegations or signs of abuse seriously and to report any such disclosure. Once a report has been made, the educator follows the directions of the protection agency (CAS). Individuals are not required to seek permission of their supervisors to report.

Child abuse comes in many forms and includes physical, mental and/ or emotional, sexual and neglect. Failure to protect a child from abuse or to seek the necessary treatment for an abused child is also a form of abuse.

### **Protection from Liability**

All persons making a report of suspected child abuse are protected against civil action, unless that person is proven to act "...maliciously or without reasonable grounds for the belief or suspicion..." (CFSA 72(7))

### **Sun Safety**

From May to September, we pay close attention to daily ultra violet radiation (UV) ratings. In high UV periods, we limit the amount of time children spend outdoors. It is our practice to apply sunscreen with a minimum protection factor of SPF 30. Families are required to provide the sunscreen of their choice and ensure that the bottle is labelled with your child's name. While on the playground, children will be required to wear their own sun hats as additional protection from the sun.

To ensure a safe and fun outdoor play, we make sure the children:

**SLIP** on a shirt, **SLAP** on a hat, **SLOP** on sunscreen!

### **Invasive Pests**

Though we know that head lice and bed bugs do not come from poor hygiene, they do cause a lot of stress for families because of their disruption and discomfort. At the Municipal Child Care Program, our main objective is to minimize the spread. Therefore, families are advised to take the following steps as soon as head lice or bed bugs are discovered.

Bed bugs found in the child's home, does not prevent them from coming to the program, however the Program will work with the family to gain control over an infestation of bed bugs. Talk to your educators about how they can support you and your family when lice or bed bugs are found (financially and emotionally).

### **Head Lice**

- Your child is to stay home until after the first treatment of shampooing and removal of eggs and or nits has been done.
- Treat your child with a special shampoo right away. Wash all combs and brushes in the medicated shampoo.

- When your child's hair is dry, the remaining nits must be removed with a fine-toothed comb, steel brush or tweezers. If this is not done thoroughly, the problem can persist. The nits should be put in a plastic bag (like a sandwich bag), and the bag tied and disposed of carefully.
- Check other family members for signs of head lice. Only affected family members should be treated at the same time.
- Clothing, stuffed toys, towels, and bed linens must be placed in a clothes dryer on high heat for 20 to 30 minutes or sealed in a plastic bag for two weeks. Vacuum beds, furniture, and rugs.
- A second shampooing is necessary two weeks after the first treatment.
- An educator will check your child's hair before they are permitted into the program.

#### Supplies You Will Need to Treat Head Lice:

Medicated Shampoo	Fine toothed comb	Washing Machine
Choose a medicated shampoo with either Pyrethrin or Permethrin in the shampoo.	Laundry detergent	Dryer
Talk to your doctor if treating a child under 2 years old.	Large garbage bags	or Laundromat
		Vacuum Cleaner
		Patience
		A good movie to keep your child occupied

## Bed Bugs

### How will you know if bed bugs are present?

- Unexplained bite marks or welts on you, your children, others.
- Spots (dried blood or bed bug fecal matter) on bedding, mattresses, or box springs.
- Cast-off bed bug skins, actual live or dead bed bugs.
- A musty or sweet odor (usually with large bed bug infestations).

### Preventing Bed Bugs from traveling in or out of your home:

- Check blankets, backpacks, and clothing daily
- Carefully inspect all second-hand or donated items for signs of bed bugs before you use them. Where possible, wash clothing and put small items in the dryer for 20-30 minutes to kill any suspected bed bugs.
- Keep your child(ren)'s belongings separate from each other by storing children's

coats, clothing or other personal items in individual sealed plastic bags or containers.

- Put clean cloth items in a dryer or wash dirty cloth items in hot water and dry in dryer. Running a normal dryer load for 20-30 minutes on high heat should kill all stages of bed bugs.
- Vacuum. It is important to pay close attention to places bed bugs like to hide, such as along dark places like baseboards and in bed frames. Dispose of vacuum bags/waste in an outside garbage container immediately after vacuuming.

### **A Happy Start for your Child**

To help your child become comfortable at their Municipal Child Care Program or School Age Program, we suggest children be introduced to care over the course of a few days - gradually working into a full-day schedule.

We also suggest that you or someone the child knows and trusts, be available during your child's first days at the Program.

Take part in your child's activities at the Program throughout the year. There are many areas you can help. For example, you can get involved in a special event. If you have a particular talent or interest, you are invited to share them with the children. Let us know how you would like to be involved.

### **Learning can be Fun and Messy**

While in the program, children will be encouraged to learn about new things by getting involved and having fun. This play-based style is the best way for children to understand the world around them. They will explore their interests and new ideas in a safe and meaningful way with their educators. Be prepared to see children laughing, smiling, crying, and even screaming with excitement while they learn.

Getting completely involved in their play is what children do, and it will be messy! Each child should have a change of clothing, as even the oldest child can get soaked during water play or cover themselves in paint or goop. Although all paints and markers are washable, we suggest children wear comfortable, washable clothing you wouldn't worry about being spoiled.

### **Clothing to Have at the Child Care Program**

Keep an extra set of clothing at the Program for your child. This extra set should change seasonally and include the items listed below. We are careful about looking after each child's personal property however we cannot be held responsible for loss or

damage to property left at the Program. Please leave any toys or personal items that hold sentimental value at home.

- Shirt
- Pants
- Underwear
- Socks
- Sweater
- Indoor shoes
- Blanket (for sleepers)
- Comfort item (where needed)
- Warm mittens, scarf, and hat
- Label your child's belongings

## **Separation**

Starting at a new program is often a difficult transition for children. Please know that separation anxiety is normal during these early years and that every child will experience it differently.

Some children may cry for a day or two, some for a whole month, and some do not cry at all for the first week, and then start to experience some problems with coping when it is time to say good-bye. Some children are fine during the program, and then cry when their families pick them up.

We understand that sometimes it can seem easier to sneak away from your child while they are happy and playing. This most often leads to your child becoming upset for longer periods of time and it ends up making the transition last a lot longer. Your child has built or is building trust in you. When you let them know you are leaving and will be back, they trust what you say.

Remember that we have a wonderful team of educators who are trained and prepared to help. The educators will reassure and comfort your child, help your child to identify his/her feelings and emotions and support him/her and you during these times.

We would like to encourage you to feel free to call or e-mail the program to receive updates on how your child is doing during the day.

## **Financial Information**

### **Hours of Care**

The Municipal Child Care Programs operate 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday. These programs are open year-round except for statutory/civic holidays and one week

between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day.

The Municipal School Age Programs operate from 7:30 to morning bell and/or from afternoon dismissal bell to 6:00pm, Monday to Friday. These programs are open during the school year from September to June. The exception to this is for statutory/civic holidays and school closures. We do not currently offer PA Day care.

The City of Peterborough recognizes the following holidays throughout the year and all programs are closed:

**Program Closures (Statutory Holidays)**

New Year's Day	Victoria Day	Thanksgiving Monday
Family Day	Canada Day	Remembrance Day
Good Friday	Civic Holiday	Christmas Eve (noon)
Easter Monday	Labour Day	Christmas Day
Professional Development Day (determined annually)		Boxing Day

## **Vacation, Holidays and Sick Days**

Your contracted hours of care are those you commit to at the time of your child's enrollment in the Program. These are the hours that you will be billed for each month. Any changes to your billable hours of care requires two weeks written notice. Please give the notice to the supervisor who will ensure the changes are processed accordingly. You will be invoiced for any additional time that you agree upon.

If you are planning an extended vacation and do not wish to pay child care fees during your vacation (e.g. July & Aug) you will have to withdraw from our services to avoid being billed.

Families who withdraw from the Program and want to return at a later date will need to add their name to our waiting list. We do not hold spaces or guarantee spaces for a later date.

## **Invoicing and Fee Collection**

Fees are approved by City Council each year. They are assessed on a monthly basis and billed in advance of care being received. Your contracted hours of care are those you request on your Enrollment Form. These are the days you will be invoiced for regardless of whether or not your child attends. There are no reductions in fees for days your child is absent due to illness, vacation, statutory holidays, or inclement weather. There are no reductions for siblings or part-days.

Prior to enrollment you will be required to sign a Parent Agreement Form which sets out the services to be received as well as the fee payment requirements.

We are pleased to share that the Municipal Child Care Program has enrolled in the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System between the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada. We believe that child care provides a strong foundation for early childhood development and well-being of children while parents work and we are committed to providing child care services that meet the needs of your children and families. Participating in the CWELCC System will help us continue to provide high quality child care that is accessible, affordable, inclusive, and sustainable.

Our **Current Daily Fees** are listed at the end of this handbook.

All billing/ invoicing questions or concerns regardless of which site your child(ren) attend should be directed to the Children's Services Financial Clerk at [billingcc@peterborough.ca](mailto:billingcc@peterborough.ca) or 705 748 8830 ext. 3806.

## **Payments**

Childcare fees are invoiced and paid monthly via credit card (VISA, MasterCard), or pre-

authorized payment (PAP/EFT). Invoices are sent to the designated parent on the 1st of each month. Payments will be processed on the 5th of each month or the first business day after the 5th.

Families who begin their childcare schedule after the invoicing process is completed, the Financial Clerk will invoice the family as soon as the paperwork is completed, and payment will be pulled on the same day.

Receipts will be emailed monthly when payment is confirmed.

In extenuating circumstances, parents who are having difficulty meeting the payment deadline and cannot make the full monthly payment by the due date, can speak with the Children's Services Financial Clerk to negotiate an alternate payment schedule if the full amount is received by the end of the month the service is received. For example, the parent may make a half payment by the 5th and the balance on the 20th.

All payments are recorded on the parent ledger in Child Care Pro.

### **Overdue Accounts and NSF Payments**

If a pre-authorized payment cannot be processed due to insufficient funds on the 5th payment, the current City of Peterborough administration charge will be added to the parents account and the full payment will be re-scheduled to come out on the 20th of that same month. Accounts not paid in full by the 20th of the month may see their child care arrangements terminated. All outstanding accounts will be sent to City of Peterborough Internal Collections for follow-up.

All reasonable attempts will be made by the Municipal Child Care Programs to support a family who is struggling to meet their payment obligations. After 3 incidents of Non-Sufficient Funds, the childcare arrangement may be terminated.

NSF charges are \$35 Per Non-Sufficient Funds.

### **Collection of Unpaid Fees**

For all payments returned NSF, the Finance designate will add the current NFS charge to the bill and re-schedule the payment for 20th of that same month. An email will be sent to notify the parent of the NSF. An invoice will be sent to the parent in advance with the new total, including the NSF fee that will be scheduled to come out on the 20th.

If the second attempt at PAP is returned again, or remains unpaid after the 20th of the month, the account will be sent to City of Peterborough internal collections and parents will be sent the NSF-PAP Memo – Municipal Child Care Form.



When an account is sent to internal collections, the Supervisor and Finance designate will forward (via email scanned documents) all supporting documentation and previous correspondence pertaining to the account to the Junior Collection Clerk for follow-up. All outstanding accounts for the month will be recorded. All accounts that have an overdue fee agreement will be tracked internally by the Supervisor and recorded on the Overdue Fee Agreement Form with directions to not to go to collections at this time. This allows for tracking of all outstanding fees and facilitates timely follow-up of all accounts.

To ensure a delinquent account from one Municipal Child Care Program does not move to another program, the Supervisor will add the name of the parents, child and the amount sent to collections to the spreadsheet titled Municipal Child Care Accounts in Collections. Before a child is granted entry to a program, the Supervisor or designate should check to make sure the family is not in a position of owing the city money. Service will be denied until the account has been brought up to date.

### **Reimbursements**

If there is a credit owing on an account and the child is still enrolled, we will credit the upcoming months fees with anything that is due to the family. If the child is no longer enrolled or the credit is not an option, we will refund through corporate finance. To do this, the family needs to be set up as a vendor in the corporate system. The finance clerk will set the family up as a vendor and prepare a request for refund. This will be approved by the Program Manager and then be sent to corporate, and they will process the payment direct to the family's bank account. This process can take up to 2-4 weeks.

### **Receipts**

Year-end receipts for Income Tax purposes will be issued in February for all fee payments made in the previous year. Please note, that only one Income Tax Receipt will be issued per family. Should you require a duplicate receipt, you will be charged an administrative fee.

### **Termination**

When accounts are overdue and no alternate arrangement for payment has been made, payment has been late on three (3) occasions, or there have been more than 3 non-sufficient fund charges, the account will be sent to Collections and child care may be discontinued. If services are terminated, the PAP/EFT will be discontinued.

### **Changes in Care and Withdrawal**

If you need to make a permanent change to your care arrangement schedule that meets our minimum requirements and in which we have the ability to accommodate, or are withdrawing your child from the Program, two weeks (10 working days) written notice is required and is to be given to the supervisor or designate. If notice is not received, you

will be charged for full program fees for a ten- day (10) period.

### **Fee Subsidy Assistance**

Children's Services provides child care fee subsidy to support the financial needs of eligible families who live in the City and County of Peterborough. Families may apply for fee assistance by contacting the Children's Services office at 748-8830. If you have been assessed and approved for subsidy, please let the supervisor know at the time of registration. You are required to pay full child care fees prior to subsidy approval, and after subsidy expires.

### **Checklist for Parents/Guardians**

#### **Talk to Us**

- Schedule a meeting with your program supervisor to discuss your child's program needs and the hours of care you require.
- Spend a little time with your child's educator in the morning when you arrive to share any information that will help your child have a great day.
- Download the Storypark App when given access and start to share information with the educators.

#### **Getting Off to a Good Start**

- Label all of your child's personal items.
- Remove drawstrings from clothing or tuck them securely into coats.
- Keep an extra set of clothing at the program for your child.
- Bring your child to the program at a regular time each day and let us know if you need to start at a different time.
- Give us the name of another adult whom we can call in case you are not available if there is an emergency.
- Have a back-up plan for child care when your child is ill and cannot come to the Program.
- Please do not bring any food, such as snacks, chewing gum, or cough candies to the program to help us ensure every child's complete safety. Outside food is not permitted in our programs, unless, upon approval, the parent is providing alternate foods for dietary restrictions and/or allergies.
- Leave important belongings that you feel your child would miss if lost, at home.

### **2025 Daily Fees**

Toddler: \$22

Preschool: \$21.64

**Junior and Senior Kindergarten (CWELCC Eligible, Under 6)**

Before School: \$12.00

After School: \$12.00

Before and After School: \$13.09

**6-12 Year Old Program**

Before School: \$11.86

After School: \$15.18

Before and After School: \$27.05