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March 2023

**PROGRAM STATEMENT**

Ballantrae Child Care Centre is committed to meeting the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of each child through caring and responsive Early Childhood Educators and Assistants. We view children as competent and capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential.

Ballantrae Child Care Centre uses a play-based approach to create the best environment for children to learn and grow. Our environment consists of age-appropriate materials, toys and equipment. We follow the lead of the children and provide activities that support their overall development using observations to guide our planning. We know that children learn best by pursuing their personal interests and goals, making their own choices about materials and activities during program time. As they pursue their choices and plans, children explore, solving problems by asking and answering questions while interacting with peers, program staff, students and other adults.

The Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), 2014 focuses on strengthening child care programs and ensuring high quality experiences for children. The CCEYA authorizes the Minister of Education to issue policy statements regarding programming for our children as well as pedagogy - how learning should take place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning; for the purpose of guiding the operators of child care programs in developing their program and services.

*How does learning happen?* Is Ontario’s pedagogy for the early years (2014) and is the product of hundreds of conversations between educators. It is organized around the four foundational conditions outlined below that are essential for children to grow and flourish:

A sense of Belonging, refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual’s experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community and the natural world.

A sense of Well-being addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness.It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

Opportunities and support for Engagement suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovation, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

Opportunities and support for Communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy

With this in mind, we see the following goals for children as being an integral part of our program.

1. Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children;

* Weekly lunch and snack schedule that meets all Canada’s Food Guide requirements is posted and up to date
* Being familiar with children’s medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions and parent preferences in respect with diet, exercise and rest time.
* Limiting disruptions to play
* Reducing hazards that may cause injury.
* Consistency in how the day is planned; this allows for self-regulation, minimizes negative behaviors and promotes general well-being.
* Sleep room checks and Playground checks ensuring a safe environment are completed daily
* A daily written and visual schedule for all to see and follow is posted
* Staff operate as a team and with the engaged awareness to ensure supervision of the whole environment and safety of all.
* Careful observation of children and scanning of the room as a whole
* Play equipment, furnishings, and learning environments will be developmentally-appropriate and safe for children.
* Compliance to Regional Public Health requirements for toy and equipment washing as part of providing a clean and sanitary environment.
* 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.
* Role model & ensure proper hand washing

1. Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;

* Staff will share with, and encourage families to be active participants in their child's care environment
* Make food and eating time a positive learning experience that promote social interactions and self-help skills. Staff will encourage children to have a healthy respect for food and eating. Staff will encourage children to self-serve to gain an understanding of portion control. Use this time to engage and develop relationships with all of the children.
* All team members will be mindful and respectful, supportive and attentive in their interactions with all children, peers and other adults by doing the following:
* Greeting parents and children (mornings and evenings)
* Provided daily feedback about the child’s day
* Listen and respond in a respectful, non-judgmental manner
* Words are used appropriately for each age
* Positive reinforcement – eye contact‐ physical comfort‐verbal encouragement
* Supportive to others whenever help/assistance is needed
* Get down to the children’s level and be part of the interaction and play
* Give parents and children time to finish their thoughts and sentences and responding in a prompt positive manner.
* Role-modeling appropriate social skills throughout the day to support learning and growth.

1. Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;

* A cozy and inviting environment is created to encourage natural opportunities for language and literacy enjoyment.
* Pretend play is an opportunity to provide children an environment and accessories, in good condition, which promotes imaginative play. Children enhance their social interaction skills, emotional development and language extension through open-ended play.
* 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.
* Interact with children in a way that fosters self-esteem. Support the children as they learn to self-regulate their emotions and to recognize empathy.
* 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
* Gently remind children to use their words to communicate their feelings or needs, giving them examples when they are struggling to find the words (say ‘mine please’, say ‘no thank you’)
* Provide quiet areas (retreat to calm down) when it is required
* Role model language and behaviour at all times
* Label emotions

1. Foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry;

* Providing a variety of activities, and an environment rich in content that encourages choices and active play.
* Preparing and executing an intentional program plan for learning experiences that children will be exposed to, promoting on-going learning opportunities and developmental growth for all children enrolled in the program.
* Block play offers opportunities to work together, imagine, learn about cause and effect, patterning and sequencing that is child initiated. Various sizes and shapes are offered.
* Spontaneous cognitive and manipulative learning experiences occur throughout the day.
* Provide independent experiences through different mediums for children, creative art promotes self-expression and individuality.
* While introducing new ideas and concepts, staff will follow the children’s lead of inquiry to broaden & further their exploration
* Provide the children with open‐ended materials that allows them to explore their own ideas
* Ensure ample time to play
* Be observant of interests and provide for those interests through varying materials

1. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;

* Staff will observe the children and ask open-ended questions and use that information to plan and create a positive learning environment that is based on the interests of the child and supported by all the adults in the child care environment.
* Educators will be responsible for introducing new ideas, interests, facts, concepts, skills and experiences to widen the child’s knowledge and life experiences
* Teams will write down observations, conversations, do research together, explore ideas and then implement them into the program
* Provide activities directly related to the children’s interests (games, books, etc.)
* Documentation: photos, log books, displays will be completed on a daily/weekly basis

1. 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;

* Staff will follow the children’s interests, adapting to their needs and wants accordingly. Children will have opportunities to encounter small and large group play experiences as well as independent play.
* Staff will listen, observe, document and discuss with families to understand the children as unique individuals.
* 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
* 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.
* Promote use of developmentally appropriate and individually tailored strategies to support child guidance
* The team will balance verbal/non-verbal interactions with children
* Staff will ensure that a variety of learning opportunities which support the individual child are offered.
* Opportunities will encompass all styles of learning and materials, and will be modified when necessary.
* If an individual needs additional guidance, assistance or modification to the activity, we as staff encourage and help if necessary
* Observing children and putting out materials that are of the children’s interest
* Gather information from parents/caregivers about each child’s likes/dislikes/needs through conversations
* When the schedule allows for long periods of uninterrupted play, with few transitions, children are calmer and more engaged. When the environment supports children’s growing autonomy and independence, challenging behaviour’s are reduced and educators can focus more fully on observing, interacting, and extending children’s learning and development in meaningful ways

1. Incorporate indoor and outdoor play as well as active play, rest and quiet time into the day and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care;

* Staff 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
* Staff remain flexible with scheduled times
* We implementing both group and individual learning opportunities
* 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.

1. Foster the engagement of, and ongoing, communication with parents about the program and their children;

* Communication needs to come from all members of the organization, the Board of Directors, the Executive Director, Supervisor and all staff.
* Parents are engaged for guidance in sleep routines, eating routines, toileting routines, in all aspects of their child’s day as appropriate.
* We pay attention to how we are meeting the needs of the children and what changes need to occur if we are not.
* Parents are encouraged to share their ideas.
* Staff complete log books that document any information the parents or other family members shares with us on a daily basis
* Brightwheel child care app

1. Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff;

* To have a mutually respected relationship with Ballantrae Public School, the principal, educators and York Region District School Board which is crucial for our ongoing operation
* Parents will be directed to resources outside of the centre if necessary to community partners such as Early Year’s Services, speech therapists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc., which are all an important part of the centre’s support to all children and their families.
* We invite the community to be involved within the Centre to extend on children’s understanding of the world around them.
* To have a mutually respected relationship with York Region which is crucial for our ongoing operation
* Donations of various articles are always welcome and at times are asked for

1. Support staff or others who interact with the children at the child care centre in relation to continuous professional learning;

* All employees will be given opportunities to participate in workshops and other professional development activities to expand their knowledge and enhance their skills and are encouraged to sign up for them.
* Staff will keep updated with the College of ECE
* Staff will exchanging knowledge and experiences with co‐workers/people working in ECE field during these learning opportunities

1. Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (A) to (J) on the children and their families.

* All staff, students and volunteers will read the Program Statement and sign off on all of the Policies and Procedures including the Program Statement Implementation Policy as required, prior to employment and prior to interacting with children, when the statement has been modified and on an annual basis.
* The Supervisor will review all sign offs by staff, students and volunteers and sign the review sheet to indicate that the process has been completed. The supervisor must be confident that the staff, students and volunteers are fully aware of and understand the Program Statement and its implementation.
* The supervisor will view each staff as competent, able, and give him/her time to be heard, respected, and to reflect on their own performance, their contributions to the environment and the development of each child in their care.
* The supervisor will use all observations, interactions and conversations to monitor all staff, students and volunteers using a Monitoring check list which will be completed yearly; discussions will include goals for the upcoming year and feedback will be provided. These will be signed and dated by the staff member and supervisor.
* Self-evaluations will be completed twice per year by all staff, students and volunteers

1. Describe the approaches that will be implemented in the program to achieve its goals

* The Program Statement Implementation policy sets out requirements and procedures to ensure that the approaches outlined in this Program Statement are implemented within our program.
* By providing a clean and safe environment for children to learn and thrive
* By hiring qualified, responsive, and well-trained Early Childhood Educators who support families in their role as primary caregivers, and who understand the needs of each child as an individual.
* By exposing children to various materials and accessories to promote natural opportunities for the development of language and literacy
* By providing a clean and safe environment as well as healthy lunches provided by Yummy Catering using Canada’s Food Guide and access to safe drinking water throughout the day
* By reviewing policies and procedures to ensure they follow the latest guidelines yearly
* By placing mirrors in play areas allow the children to see themselves from a different perspective.
* Staff will ensure that craft supplies are stocked and will inform the supervisor when provisions are running low.
* Use of computer or tablet to do research when predictions and questions arise are available to all staff
* Children in the centre for a full day will experience many opportunities throughout the day for indoor play and two hours of outdoor play daily (weather permitting) as well as a two hours after lunch to rest and sleep. Staff will be mindful of each child’s needs and parental direction.
* Quiet activities and experiences are offered to children who do not sleep at rest time
* Communication may be in person, by phone, e-mail or through written and posted communication tools
* A Whitchurch-Stouffville librarian comes to us once a month for story time with our Toddler/Preschool group supporting our children through literacy.
* During the course of the year organizations will be brought into the centre for various activities and experiences
* Donations drives at holiday time are organized and brought to local charity
* Workforce Funding is available through York Region to support staff with professional learning experiences
* Off‐site workshops/Zoom Webinars are offered
* First aid & CPR is organized/paid for by Ballantrae Child Care Centre

Records pertaining to the monitoring of our Program Statement will be kept for a minimum of three years.  
  
References and information in this living document are from:   
  
[How Does Learning Happen? - Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years](https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf)   
[The Extended Day Program - Ministry of Education, Ontario](https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/kinderProgram2010.pdf)