

Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre

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Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre

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Welcome Letter

Welcome to Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre, we thank you for letting us be a part of your child's early years! Over the years, research has shown that the early years are the most important stages of development for a child. At Mulberry Bush Child Care, we strive to make your child's experience a positive and loving one, continuously supporting their developmental needs and being an extension of your family. With every child having their own interest and stages of development, our educators create an atmosphere that enhances every child's learning through engagement, exploration, play provocations, and supportive guidance through a play-based environment.

Our mission at Mulberry Bush is to provide the utmost care for your child. We provide an inclusive, safe, and comfortable home-like environment. Our educators believe that children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. We believe that your child's health, safety, nutrition, and well-being is important and therefore it is our priority to provide the best care for each child and their individual needs. Our educators observe, engage, encourage, and document your child daily regarding their needs and accomplishments. We work together with all families to ensure your child's experience at the Mulberry Bush Child Care is the best it can be. We know that families are the experts when it comes to their children and their needs, and therefore sharing all knowledge is integral to the success of your child. Our families are valued through positive and responsive relationships and are welcomed into the program. We believe that having open communication with families through daily conversations and documentations is the true key to success!

Within this document, you will find information pertaining to the policies and procedures of the centre. Please feel free to follow up with any questions or concerns regarding these policies as Mulberry Bush Child Care has an open-door policy for communication.

On behalf of all the educators and myself, we welcome you to Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre. May your time with us be a positive experience for both you and your child!

Sincerely,

Stacey Aucoin, BSc. R.E.C.E

Program Goals and Approaches

To ensure that Mulberry Bush Child Care provides high quality experiences for families and children, our programming and pedagogy is guided by the following documents:

- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Early Learning for Every Child Today
- Ontario Early Years Framework
- Think Feel Act: Lessons from Research About Young Children

We believe that every child should feel:

- A sense of belonging, connected to others, and feel that they can contribute to their world.
- The need to develop a strong sense of self, health, and well-being.
- That they are an active and engaged learner who explores the world with their body, mind, and senses.
- Capable communicator who can express themselves in many ways.

At Mulberry Bush Child Care, we provide a child-led, play-based learning environment that encourages children to explore and interact in their environments freely. We do this by giving children the freedom to pursue their personal interests through their chosen materials and activities. When children are given the ability to make their own choices, they are:

- More engaged in their activity
- They are eager to explore their environment
- They ask more questions
- They problem solve
- They interact more with their peers, program staff, volunteers, and students.

We view children as competent, capable of complex thinking, and rich in potential. By observing the children's daily interactions and language, we learn about their interests, experiences, as well as their needs. We believe that each child deserves the proper encouragement and space to try new things, explore their new ideas and develop in their own unique way. Children are developing the ability to self-regulate, this is an essential part of a child's healthy development. Understanding and helping children to develop self-regulation skills is a key component of the Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre. Our staff know that self-regulation develops over time with maturity, experience and with proper nurturing adult support and therefore we work continuously with our children to help them gain these skills and be able to use them as they grow.

We provide an environment that fosters curiosity and allows children to explore freely. By recognizing and acting upon teachable moments, our staff engage children in activities that are meaningful and relevant to their own environment. Our educators participate in professional learning opportunities throughout the year to ensure that current practices are being followed.

One of our core values at Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre is to foster the relationships among children, families, staff, and our community partners. We accomplish this by committing to collaborating with all our community partners, such as: All Kids Belong, Tyke Talk and Thames Valley Children's Centre. With our community partners, we work on the mutual goal of providing the best possible childcare service to all families. We value positive and responsive relationships with families. By engaging families in a meaningful way, this partnership ensures that we can focus on their child's social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive development in a holistic way.

Our centre aims to ensure that families have access to available, affordable, safe, reliable, high quality licensed childcare for their children, which allows parents to feel peace of mind while their children are in the centre.

Respect, care, empathy, trust, and integrity are the core values in all our interactions with the children in our care as well as their families.

Guiding Children's Success

Our goal for the children and staff is to have a safe and enjoyable time while at the Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre. We establish reasonable limits for behaviour which are consistently monitored by all staff. These limits are appropriate to the developmental level of the child and consider the health, safety, and the rights of all individuals. We believe in a positive approach to guide the children with each situation. Our methods include redirection, modeling, providing choices, recognizing appropriate behavior, and involving children in conflict resolutions.

Parent Involvement

At the Mulberry Bush we welcome parents' involvement in all aspects of our program. Daily communication with the program staff is a valuable method of contributing to your child's care. Special events are held during childcare hours and are planned in advanced to ensure parent participation is available. Parents are welcome and encouraged to join in the special festivities as it is a great bonding opportunity for children, parents, and staff alike.

Addressing Matters of Concern

We believe that open communication with parents is essential to a quality childcare experience. Daily communication is a big aspect of our program, we accomplish this through face-to-face interactions, emails or through the phone. With our daily communication, we work with you and ask for your feedback to ensure your child has a positive experience while in our care. All issues or concerns are taken seriously, and every effort will be made to address and resolve the issues and concerns as quickly as possible.

Lunches and Snacks

At the Mulberry Bush, nutritious lunches and snacks are prepared daily in house. Children are provided with healthy snacks/meals daily and food is never used as a reward or punishment. We allow and encourage children to follow cues regarding their own hunger or fullness.

By following Canada's Food Guide, a 6-week rotational menu is planned and posted for you to reference. The centre provides a morning snack, Lunch, and an afternoon snack for the children.

Outdoor Play/Learning

At the Mulberry Bush we know that outdoor play enhances physical health, increases focus, intellectual development, and emotional well-being. An outdoor environment provides opportunities for children to be creative, curious, and experimental with their surroundings. Our daily program allows children the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities for a minimum of 2 hours per day.

Prohibited Practices

Under No circumstances is the following permitted:

- Corporal punishment of a child.
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten a child or undermine his/her self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.
- Deprivation of children of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding.
- Locking the exits of a childcare program for the purpose of confining a child, or confining a child in an area or room without adult supervision
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will
- Physical restraint of a child

Licensing: Mulberry Bush Child Care is a licensed childcare facility. This license is obtained through the Ministry of Education (MEDU) to operate our childcare centre. The program is inspected and licensed annually, and a license is issued upon successful completion of the licensing procedure. More information about licensing is available on the Ministry website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents.

Safe Arrival and Departures

Safe arrival of children at our centre is ensured by requiring that you, or your designate, take your child directly to a staff member on duty each morning at drop off. You must ensure that a staff acknowledges your child's arrival. The duty of care is not transferred to our staff until your child is successfully signed in on our attendance form by the educator.

Safe departure from our care is ensured by requiring that you, or your designate who is picking up your child inform staff that you are removing your child from care and the staff has signed the child out on the attendance.

No child will be released to someone who is not listed on their contact form in their Registration-Package. However, we understand that emergency situations do arise. In those cases, you must contact the director directly. All persons picking up your child, other than the parent/guardian, will be required to show picture ID and have their designated door access control system code. Anyone under the age of 16 years of age will not be permitted to pick up your child.

Staff: Our staff at the Mulberry Bush are warm and caring qualified professionals, carefully chosen through a selection process designed to determine their ability to meet the needs of young children. Our program staff have the following credentials:

- Early Childhood Education Diploma and are a member in good standing with the College of ECE.
- Valid First Aid (infant/child CPR) and WHMIS training
- Up-to-date immunization record
- Vulnerable Sector Check
- Anaphylactic allergy training.

Students: At certain times throughout the year, students may come to our centre to learn from our staff. All students participating in childcare opportunities will be under direct supervision of our director and staff and

will never be left alone with the children. All students will participate in tasks and responsibilities that are directly related to their school curriculum. Students are required to have a Vulnerable Sector Check completed and must participate in a Policy and Procedure review.

Waitlist Policy

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for a childcare centre that maintains a waiting list to have related policies and procedures.

General: Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the childcare centre. Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed. No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.

Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List: The licensee or designate will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via one-list online application, telephone, or in-person meeting.

When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to children who are currently enrolled and need to move to the next age grouping, and siblings of children currently enrolled. Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program room availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via telephone or email that a space has become available in their requested program. Parents will be provided a timeframe of 48 hours in which a response is required before the next child on the waiting list will be offered the space. Where a parent has not responded within the given timeframe, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality: The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents.

The Director is responsible for maintaining and managing the waitlist from the one-list, telephone inquiries, or walk-in clients.

One-List: The Mulberry Bush Child Care supports the utilization of London's centralized online childcare wait list. To provide families with quick, easy access to the one-list wait list, the Mulberry Bush Child Care provides a direct link on our website.

Once parents have completed the on-line wait list, our Director is notified of the request by email, then it is reviewed regularly. Parents are welcome to contact the centre regarding any questions or concerns through phone, email or in person.

Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care Plan (CCELCC)

The Mulberry Bush Child Care Centre is **not** enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care Plan (CCELCC).