

# Parent Handbook



OXFORD COMMUNITY  
CHILD CARE  
EDUCATION THROUGH ELEVATION

*Updated June 2021*



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Ingersoll & Thamesford Preschool:	preschool@oxfordccc.ca
School Age Programs:	sap@oxfordccc.ca
Home Child Care:	hcc@oxfordccc.ca

**Administrative Office Hours:**

Monday to Friday

8:30am to 4:30pm

**Follow us on Social Media:**

Facebook:

Oxford Community Child Care

Twitter:

@OxfordCCC

Instagram:

@oxfordcommunitycc

## SERVICES OFFERED & AGE CATEGORIES SERVED

Program	Age	Hours
<b>Ingersoll Children’s Centre</b> 24 Raglan Street Ingersoll, ON N5C 1P9	<b>Birth to 6 years</b>	<b>Monday to Friday</b> 7:30am-5:30pm
<b>Garderie francophone du comté d’Oxford</b> 700 Bristol Street Woodstock, ON N4T 0E4	<b>18 months to 6 years</b>	<b>Monday to Friday</b> 7:30am-5:30pm
<b>Thamesford Preschool</b> 220 Dundas Street Thamesford, ON N0M 2M0	<b>30 months to 6 years</b>	<b>Tuesdays &amp; Thursdays</b> 9:30am-12:00pm
<b>Ingersoll Preschool</b> 24 Raglan Street Ingersoll, ON N5C 1P9	<b>30 months to 6 years</b>	<b>Mondays to Thursdays</b> 9:30am-12:00pm
<b>School Age Programs</b> AJ Baker Public School Blenheim District Public School East Oxford Central Public School Harrisfield Public School Laurie Hawkins Public School Plattsville & District Public School Thamesford Public School Zorra Highland Park Public School École St. Marguerite Bourgeoys	<b>44 months to 13 years</b>	<b>Monday to Friday</b> 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 6:00pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:00am - 9:00am, 3:30pm - 5:30pm 7:30am to School, School to 5:30pm

### Holidays & Closures

All programs are closed on:

New Year’s Day	Victoria Day	Labour Day
Family Day	Canada Day	Thanksgiving
Good Friday	August Civic Holiday	Christmas Day & Boxing Day

Child Care Centres are shut down for a week at the beginning of July, exact dates to be determined each year. All programs are also closed between Christmas Day and New Year’s Day, exact dates to be determined each year.

School Age Programs are offered at select locations for PA Days, Spring Break, and Summer.

## ABOUT US

Oxford Community Child Care Inc. is a non-profit organization formed in 1987 by a volunteer Board of Directors.

OCCC is a multi-service, multi-site organization offering early learning and child care, licensed home child care, preschool and school age programs.

Our vision is to partner with community agencies and provide the leadership necessary to offer services that promote the healthy growth, development, and learning in children and their families in Oxford County.

The Parent Handbook is subject to change. While we will attempt to provide advanced notice of changes, it is not always possible. Please refer to our website for the most recent version of the Parent Handbook.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Oxford Community Child Care Inc. is committed to providing quality child care programs and support services for families throughout Oxford County and the surrounding area.

We believe that opportunities for early learning and development are provided by the collaborative efforts of our professionals, children, parents, and community partners.

## VISION

1. To provide developmentally stimulating programming to enhance all areas of growth and development and self-esteem for children serviced through our programs.
2. To strengthen the family by providing support and guidance to parents and caregivers in their child rearing roles and by providing activities that are conducive to positive adult/child interactions.
3. To provide accessible and affordable child care options which meet the diversified needs of the children and families in Oxford County.
4. To establish and maintain quality child care programs and services throughout Oxford County where the needs are identified with an emphasis on meeting the needs of rural families.
5. To serve as a resource for parents, caregivers, and other professionals in the area of child care.

## PROGRAM & PEDAGOGY

Oxford Community Child Care recognizes and supports *“How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)”* as the document to be used for the purpose of guiding the development of our programs, informing our decisions regarding best practices, and building professional capacity in a quality early learning team.

We are in agreement with the Minister’s policy statement that, together with the regulations that guide program development, pedagogy, and practice in all child care and early learning settings, *“How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)”* is intended to strengthen the quality of programs and ensure high quality experiences that lead to positive outcomes in relation to children’s learning, development, health, and well-being.

All programs offered by Oxford Community Child Care will use observation, reflective practice, critical thinking, and a sound knowledge of child development to develop quality experiences for children and families. *“How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)”* is the foundation on which we will build our practice.

## **PROGRAM STATEMENT**

OCCC programs are governed by the Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014 and are licensed by the Ministry of Education. For our Program Statement, please see [www.oxfordccc.ca/policy/](http://www.oxfordccc.ca/policy/) or Appendix A.

All employees, and most specifically employees who work directly with children and families, will work towards the goals and ideals of the Program Statement in their daily work routines and activities using the approaches and strategies as outlined, to the best of their current ability to meet expectations.

Employees who work directly with children and families and do not yet have the necessary skills to implement the Program Statement in their daily work routines and activities will be actively working towards achieving those skills and implementing their new knowledge on an ongoing basis. All administrative and support staff will apply the Program Statement to their position and duties as best possible.

## **STAFF QUALIFICATIONS**

OCCC staff are well trained in early childhood education and other specialties. Staff members consist of Registered Early Childhood Educators who are members in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators or who are otherwise approved by the Ministry of Education. Our school age program facilitators come from various backgrounds including Early Childhood Education, Child and Youth Care, Recreation and Leisure Services, and teaching.

All staff are certified in Standard First Aid & CPR Level C and have a clear Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Persons Screening.

OCCC provides monthly staff meetings that support professional learning and growth, and staff are expected to participate in professional learning opportunities available in the community.

## **STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS**

Oxford Community Child Care encourages academic placements to enhance the knowledge and skill development of high school, community college, and university students. We currently do not offer volunteer opportunities.

Students and volunteers are required to submit a clear Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Persons Screening and read through OCCC’s policies and procedures prior to starting their placement.

Direct unsupervised access to children and clients is not permitted. Students and volunteers must always be accompanied and directly supervised by a qualified educator or assigned staff. Students and volunteers may not be counted in ratios at any time, for any reason.

## FEES FOR SERVICES

**General Information** – In order to maintain efficient operations, all parent fees are due in advance of receiving care or on the first day of the month, whichever is first. Alternate payment schedules may be arranged on request with the Parent Accounts Administrator. Fees remain the same regardless of absence for any reason, and are not charged during our shutdown periods. Monthly school age program fee calculations are explained in the School Age Program Registration Package.

**Subsidy** – To determine if you're eligible for subsidy, please visit [www.oxfordcounty.ca](http://www.oxfordcounty.ca). For families who receive fee subsidy, written confirmation must be received from the case worker and placed in the client's financial file prior to starting care. Families are fully responsible for fees not covered by subsidy. Any such fees are payable immediately.

**Late Payments** – Accounts without payment by the fifth (5) business day of the month will be assessed a late fee of \$10.00. The parent/guardian will receive notice that their fees are overdue and that failure to pay their fees within the next five (5) business days may result in the termination of care. If after ten (10) days, the account has not received payment, a final notice will be issued including the total amount due and the date of termination of care. Fees will be charged up to and including the two week notice period. After 60 days, if the account remains unpaid in full, the account will be sent to collections for further action.

**Payment Methods** – OCCC accepts personal cheques (current or post-dated) at program locations. All cheques must be made payable to Oxford Community Child Care (OCCC). A service charge of \$25.00 is payable for cheques returned for any reason. Once a cheque has been returned NSF, future payments made by cheque must be certified. Alternative payments such as e-transfer, Visa, MasterCard, Interac, and cash are available at the main office only. Program staff do not carry any cash nor may they accept cash while they are in program. Please contact the Parent Accounts Administrator for more details.

**Late Pick Up Fees** – Parents or their designates who pick up child(ren) after the program's closing time are required to sign a late pick up acknowledgement form. You are considered late if you arrive after the maximum hours of care as per your agreement. Late fees are charged per child at a rate of \$10.00 for every 10 minutes or part thereof. Late fees will be added to the monthly statement and are payable within 30 days of the occurrence. Violation of the late fee policy may result in termination of care.

**Receipt of Payment** – Tax receipts are issued in February for all child care expenses paid from January 1 to December 31 of the previous year. Receipts are issued in the name registered to the account regardless of who pays the fees. Only one receipt will be issued per family. There is a \$25.00 fee for duplicate receipts. Please keep your address information up to date.

**Fee Increases** – The Board of Directors annually reviews program fees. When considering fee increases, the Board reviews a number of factors including trends in the cost of business and the rate of inflation. Fee increases typically occur in January for full year programs and September for school age programs.

**Questions** – Questions or concerns regarding your account can be directed to the Parent Accounts Administrator at the main office at 519-539-4419 or [accounts@oxfordccc.ca](mailto:accounts@oxfordccc.ca).

## WAITLISTS

Fees are not charged for adding a child's name to wait lists for child care at OCCC programs. New children are accepted into programs based on the availability of the type of care the parent/guardian has indicated at the time of placing their name on the waiting list. The waitlist can be accessed at <https://onehsn.com/oxford>

There are a limited number of half time, part time, and/or flex spaces available so parents/guardians requesting this model of care may wait longer than parents/guardians requesting a full time model. Flex care is available in our school age program only.

**For the Garderie & École St. Marguerite Bourgeoys only** – The waitlist is divided into four priorities based on the requirements of CSC Providence (School Board), with higher priorities placed before lower:

1. Francophone families
2. Children of students at École Secondaire Notre Dame
3. Siblings of children attending École St. Marguerite Bourgeoys
4. Community families

## ADMISSION & WITHDRAWAL

**Admission** – Parent/guardians must fully complete, sign, and date a registration package prior to starting care. A minimum of 3 business days is required for processing. A non-refundable registration fee is required prior to the admission being processed.

**Subsidy** – Written confirmation of approval must be received prior to starting care. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to follow up with their case worker if approval is delayed. Consent for the case worker to obtain information from our agency is provided with the subsidy application. OCCC will be required to provide requested information to the case worker without further consent or notice.

**Child Records** – Records must be kept current. Parents/guardians are required to notify the Child Care Administrator of any changes or updates, in writing. Parents/guardians must annually review and sign to acknowledge that registration information is correct for child care programs.

**Immunizations** – All children who are not in attendance at school must be immunized as recommended by the local Medical Officer of Health. A copy of the child's yellow immunization card, doctor's printout, or for newcomer's to Canada, their immunization papers are required for registration. Where the parent/guardian of the child objects to immunization on the grounds that the immunization conflicts with the sincerely held convictions of the parent/guardian's religion or conscience or a legally qualified medical practitioner gives medical reasons why the child should not be immunized, such objections must be submitted on the form approved and provided by the Ministry of Education.

**Custody and Access** – OCCC staff will remain impartial in matters of child custody and access. Both parents have equal rights and equal access to their child unless a court order states otherwise. The custodial parent is responsible for providing a copy of any and all court orders that apply to the child, specifically if they limit the access and rights of the other parent. Without a copy of the court order, OCCC cannot deny a parent access to their child and/or information regarding their child.

**Emergency Contact Information** – Emergency contacts must be provided and are expected to be available and within a reasonable distance to pick up children. If a person on the emergency list is contacted and

refuses to attend for the child, they will be removed as an emergency contact. The parent/guardian must then supply a new emergency contact prior to returning to care. Emergency contact information must include home and work/school addresses and reachable telephone numbers. At least one emergency contact is mandatory.

**Late Pick Up Procedures** – Parents or their designates are required to have picked up their child(ren) no later than the closing time of the program. When unable to pick up their child on time, it is the parent’s responsibility to make alternative arrangements to pick the child up on time. Habitual lateness or unacceptable alternative arrangements may result in termination of care. Parents are responsible for the late fees incurred by their designates.

**Withdrawal** – When withdrawing from care, parents/guardians must give two (2) weeks written notice or pay fees for two (2) weeks care in lieu of notice. A child may be withdrawn if absent for two weeks without previous notification. Fees are payable for the notice period.

**Withdrawal Due to Special Circumstances** – OCCC reserves the right to request that a child be withdrawn from a program if we cannot meet the needs of the child or family. The family would be consulted first. All decisions are made in the best interests of all children in the program

***OCCC reserves the right to withdraw child care services without notice for the following reasons:***

1. A child’s behaviour is consistently causing disruption to the program and/or harm to other children, staff, or property
2. A parent/guardian is refusing or failing to abide by OCCC policies and procedures
3. A parent/guardian’s conduct is harassing, belligerent, abusive, or inappropriate
4. Outstanding fees

## **CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY**

OCCC is committed to protecting the privacy of its families. Employees are obligated to ensure that personal information to which they may have access to remains confidential, is only used for the purposes for which it was collected, is not disclosed without authorization or used for personal gain.

No family is required to provide consent for sharing of information as a condition of enrollment. Access to children’s records may be given to officials of the following jurisdictions without parent consent: Coroner’s Office; Courts in response to a warrant or court order; Ombudsman; Authorities vested in provincial or federal status (ie. Public Health, CAS, Subsidy); and/or Minister and officials to whom he/she has delegated authority (ie. Program Advisors).

Registration packages and children’s files will be kept secured and accessed only by those with authorization to do so. Authorized personnel include the Administrators, Parent Accounts Administrator, Finance Coordinator, Team Leaders, Program Staff working with the family, and the Executive Director.

## **ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE**

**Attendance Records** – Daily attendance records are kept that show the arrival and departure time of each child or whether a child was absent. Parents are required to sign the child in and out of program indicating the actual time of arrival and departure and include their initials in the box as indicated. Attendance records must be kept up to date at all times. Parents/guardians must contact the appropriate Supervisor or the Child Care Administrator if their child will be absent for any reason.



**For School Age Programs only** – At the end of morning program, children are dismissed to the school as per the individual agreement with each school. Children in JK/SK are walked to their classrooms and care is transferred from OCCC to the teacher or DECE. Staff will sign all children out on the attendance sheet. After school, children arrive at the program or meet at the predetermined gathering place as per the arrangements at each school. Attendance is taken immediately to ensure all children are accounted for. If children are expected but do not arrive at the program, staff must follow OCCC procedures. Please note that the school is ultimately responsible for your child until they arrive in our program.

***It is critically important that parents/guardians contact the Program Administrator regarding absences of any kind. Messages may NOT be sent through the school or the staff at the program.***

**Authorization to Release a Child** – In order to ensure the safety of all children, staff of Oxford Community Child Care will release children only to those adults indicated on the registration form. During the intake process, the parent/guardian will identify those adults, 16 years and over, who have consent to pick up their child without prior permission. Parents/guardians may identify as many adults as they choose. These adults will be required to show photo identification until all the staff have met that adult.

Parents/guardians must identify at least one person, preferably two, whom may make emergency decisions, if necessary, on their behalf if they cannot be reached during an absolute emergency. The emergency contact must be a minimum of 18 years of age. Parents/guardians have the right to update and/or remove anyone from the list, at their discretion, unless a court order states otherwise. In the case of families with custody concerns, it is advisable to have a copy of the court order on file. Without a copy of the court order, OCCC does not have the right to deny access to the non-custodial parent.

Parents may give permission for someone to pick up on an occasional or last minute basis by completing the occasional release form for the dates required or contacting the Supervisor or Child Care Administrator via email or phone by 12:00pm noon on the day of. The full name of the person and relationship to the child is required.

**School Age Extra-Curricular Activities** – Advanced special consent is required for children to attend extra-curricular activities at the school during program hours. Children attending extra-curricular activities are in the care of the school staff. OCCC is not responsible during this time. School staff may sign children into the program after an activity has ended but may not sign a child out of the program. Contact the Team Leader or Child Care Administrator for additional information about attending extra-curricular activities.

**Impairment Procedures** – Staff will not allow a child to leave with a parent/guardian or adult who is impaired. Staff will call an alternate person to take the child home. If the parent/guardian or adult insists on taking the child, staff have been instructed to phone the police and inform them of the impaired person. If police are called, the Children’s Aid Society (CAS) will also be called. Following the incident, a report will be filed with Oxford Community Child Care and the Ministry of Education. The parent/guardian or adult will be asked to leave the program.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

OCCC will make every effort to provide child care services as scheduled throughout the year. However, in the event of inclement weather and dangerous road conditions, we may be forced to close early or not run programs. Fees remain the same.

Please note that elementary schools remain open during inclement weather, which means our school age programs will run accordingly. In the event that school age staff are late due to inclement weather, parents must wait with their children until the staff member arrives. Children cannot be left with the custodian or other staff members of the school.

Please follow our social media for closure information or visit our website at [www.oxfordccc.ca](http://www.oxfordccc.ca). Closures are also posted to Heart FM and local news.

## HEALTH

A daily health observation will be performed on each child by staff prior to the child entering the program and before the parent/guardian leaves. Oxford Community Child Care is unable to accommodate ill children in the programs. Children who are unable to fully participate in the program, or are assessed to be too ill for the program, will be sent home. Children who have been absent with contagious illnesses may be required to provide a physician's note clearing them for return to program.

### ***Children with any of the following will not be permitted to stay in programs:***

1. An elevated fever of 101°F (38.5°C) or higher
2. Vomiting within a 24 hour period
3. Diarrhea consisting of 2 consecutive loose bowel movements within a 24 hour period
4. Visible rashes that have not been diagnosed by a physician
5. Any contagious diseases as listed for exclusion on the Oxford County Guide to Common Infection
6. A severe cold accompanied by coughing and congestion
7. Head lice

**Head Lice** – To prevent spread, children with head lice are not permitted to attend program. The child may return to program once the head lice/nits have been treated and/or there is no evidence of lice or nits. The parent/guardian is to contact the Supervisor of Child Care Administrator prior to returning to program.

## CLOTHING & BELONGINGS

Children require comfortable, practical clothing and proper foot wear to ensure safety during active play. Indoor and outdoor footwear is required. Slippers are not permitted except in the infant program. Flip flops or unsecured sandals are also not permitted. All children should have at least one spare change of clothes.

Please dress your child according to the weather. Items needed for outdoor play include outdoor shoes, boots (winter/rubber), hats (sun/winter), splash/rubber pants, wind/snow suits, and mittens. Extra mittens are essential for programs that go outside twice a day.

**Child Care Centres** – Children who are toilet training should have three or more changes of clothes. This includes pants, tops, undershirts, and socks. Our centres maintain a limited supply of spare clothing. We request that parents launder and return borrowed clothes as soon as possible. All clothing and other personal items such as diapers, bottles, soothers, blankets, comfort toys, and creams must be labelled with the child's name.

## DIAPERING & TOILETING

**Child Care Centres** – Parents are required to supply disposable diapers and wipes for at least one week. It is possible to store larger quantities at your centre if desired. When you feel your child is physically and emotionally ready to begin toilet training, please discuss it with the staff so we may work together. We ask parents to bring additional clothing and underwear at this time. Wet or soiled clothing will be rinsed and put in plastic bags in your child’s cubby.

**Creams and Powders** – Skin care products for diapering such as Zincofax, Peneten and their store brand equivalents require written parent authorization. Products must be unscented, in their original container and labelled with the child’s name. Products intended for a yeast infection, ie. Canesten, polysporin or hydrocortisone require a physician’s prescription and are treated the same as prescription medication.

OCCC staff may not apply any products considered natural, naturopathic, and homeopathic or products provided by a pharmacist or other health care professional. Powders of any kind, including corn starch, are also not permitted.

**School Age Programs** – For children requiring assistance, please arrange for the Educational Assistant at the school to change or take your child to the washroom prior to entering our program.

## REST PERIOD

**Child Care Centres** – There is a rest period each day after the midday meal. Children may sleep, rest, or engage in quiet activities based on their individual needs. Children may bring a favourite blanket or sleep toy for rest time only. Each child will have their own cot with their own linens. The centres launder the linens weekly.

Children’s needs change from time to time. If a child that doesn’t regularly sleep either falls asleep, requests a nap or is clearly in need of rest, the child’s needs will be provided for. Alternatively, a parent may choose to pick up their child.

**\*For infants at Ingersoll Children’s Centre** – Infant sleep times will be determined based on their individual needs. Every child younger than 12 months will be placed for sleep on their back unless the child’s physician recommends otherwise in writing. Staff will perform periodic direct visual checks of sleeping children.

## OUTDOOR PLAY & EQUIPMENT

Children benefit from time spent outside playing and exploring where they are able to connect with the natural world and their community. Please ensure your child is dressed for the weather (see Clothing & Belongings). Outdoor play is an integral part of our daily program. If your child cannot go outside due to illness or other reasons, they will not be permitted to attend.

Children are directly supervised at all times. Programs will check and monitor weather daily to ensure appropriate conditions for outdoor play. All advisories by Oxford County Public Health will be followed. Outdoor play will not be permitted during a heat alert or extreme cold advisory. Playground and outdoor inspections are conducted daily.

**Child Care Centres** – Children at our centres may play on the climbers unless it is wet, icy, snowy, or otherwise deemed dangerous for any reason.

**Thamesford Preschool** – Not applicable.

**School Age Programs** – Use of the school’s playground equipment is strictly prohibited.

## ACTIVITIES OFF PREMISES

**Child Care Centres** – Walks and outings are an integral part of centre based programs. The purpose is to allow for exercise, fresh air, and exploration in the community. A plan will be in place for children who do not receive permission to participate. Field trips requiring transportation are not permitted.

**Walk** – A predetermined route.

**Outing** – A walk to a nearby location for a specific purpose of short duration (under one hour in length), for example a picnic at the park. Transportation is not required but signed parental consent is.

**Field Trip** – A longer outing that requires permission slips and transportation.

School Age Programs do not participate in off-premise activities due to the time frame of the program.

## NUTRITION

Adequate and appropriate nutrition is vital to children’s health, growth, development, and well-being. Our child care programs support children’s health and well-being by providing healthy meals and snacks and establishing positive eating environments. Foods are selected in accordance with *Canada’s Food Guide*. A wide variety of foods are offered to encourage children’s food experiences. Our Dietary Aides possess their Food Handler Certificate, and our facilities are inspected by the Board of Health.

Children choose whether they would like to eat and how much. A variety of different colours, textures and flavours are offered in child sized portions. No child is ever forced to eat or drink. Parents are often amazed at the foods their child will eat at the program that they will not eat at home. Children are closely supervised while eating to ensure that sharing of food and cross-contamination does not occur.

Parents/guardians are not permitted to bring in food from home or outside of program. Exceptions are permitted only for infants not eating table food or special dietary restrictions relating to allergies (ie. soy milk) or religious observance. Allergies and food restrictions must be noted at the time of registration as additional form completion may be required. For allergies, an allergy history form is mandatory. If a child requires a specific diet, the diet must be verified by a health care practitioner and the parent/guardian will be responsible for supplying food that meets the criteria of OCCC’s anaphylaxis policy. Please be aware that we are unable to accommodate preferred diets for non-medical reasons.

School Age children attending a full day program on a non-instructional day will provide their own lunch that meets the following criteria:

- Choices based on Canada’s Food Guide;
- At least one serving of fruit or vegetables;
- No peanuts/nuts, peanut/nut products or products that may contain peanuts/nuts;
- A beverage of white or chocolate milk or pure fruit juice. Pop and sugary drinks are prohibited.

- An insulated lunch bag with freezer pack. Refrigeration is not available.
- Labelled with the child's name

Staff are required to inspect lunches to look for potential allergens and ensure that all items meet the criteria. Items that do not meet the criteria must be sent home with the parent.

If a child forgets to bring a lunch, staff will create a lunch, as best they can, from the snack supplies at the program.

Children may NOT share lunches or items from their lunches to avoid allergens and cross-contamination.

Oxford Community Child Care is a peanut and nut aware environment meaning we do not serve, prepare, or cook with peanut/nut products, including nut milks such as almond milk. While every effort is made to ensure an aware and healthy environment, "peanut and nut aware" is not a guarantee that the environment is peanut/nut safe or free. Please note that OCC programs do serve egg, fish and dairy products.

**Child Care Centres** – One mid-morning snack, one hot meal, and one mid-afternoon snack is provided daily. Menus are posted in the kitchen window, in each room, and are available to parents upon request. If your child arrives early and breakfast at home is not possible, please notify the staff that your child may be hungry. We are able to provide a light snack to get your child through until regular snack time.

***\*Parents/guardians of infants at Ingersoll Children's Centre must provide:***

- A daily supply of fresh pre-mixed formula or clean, empty bottles for homo milk. Bottles must be plastic.
- Any food substitutes that your infant may need due to allergies or foods not tried yet.
- Dry infant cereals for breakfast and infant foods required by your child.

All bottles and food containers must be labeled with your child's name. Parents/guardians that wish to have their infant eating from our menu are required to try all new foods at home first on 2 separate occasions in case of an allergic reaction. Please continually update the staff on your child's feeding schedule to ensure they are aware of the new foods your child is allowed.

**Thamesford Preschool** – A mid-morning snack is provided. The menu is posted on the bulletin board.

**School Age Programs** – A snack is provided in both the morning and afternoon programs. Menus are posted on the program's display board. If your child has a healthy food item leftover from lunch they may choose to eat it at snack time if they wish. Sweet or salty treats will not be permitted.

## INDIVIDUALIZED SUPPORT PLANS (ISP)

Staff and families work together to ensure that children with special needs are able to participate in all aspects of the program. The individualized support plan (ISP) includes information on any additional supports, accommodations or assistance that may be needed to ensure the child has a meaningful experience along with specific aids (ie. Mobility devices, hearing aids) and how to use them.

Plans are updated as needed. All staff, students and volunteers review each plan to ensure consistency in the implementation of the plan.

## ANAPHYLAXIS & ALLERGIES

Each child identified with an anaphylactic allergy will have an emergency plan prepared. Emergency plans include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency.

As the outcome may be serious, a list of all children who have allergies of any kind must be readily available to all staff. An allergy history form must be completed. For anaphylactic allergies, the child's physician must also sign the allergy history form.

Emergency plans will be posted in each cooking and serving area, each playroom or area, and in any other area where children may be present. A copy of the plan will also be kept in the emergency pouch with the EpiPen. Where it is not possible to post a plan (ie. shared space in schools), the plan will be easily accessible to staff.

For everyone's safety, parents who serve foods containing allergens at home are encouraged to ensure their child has been rid of the allergens prior to attending the home child care premises (e.g. by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.).

While food from home is not permitted, exceptions are allowed for special diets (medically required or religious observation) and school age children attending full day programs on non-instructional days. Parents will be informed about anaphylactic allergies and all known allergens at the Program they are attending via written communication, preferably email to expedite the process. It is important to know that this list may be different than the school day list for children attending school.

It is important that parents:

- Do not provide items with 'may contain' warnings on the label in a premises with a child who has an individualized plan and emergency procedures specifying those allergens.
- Do not bring foods to the premises that contain ingredients to which children may be allergic or they have been advised not to bring.
- For specially required diets, ensure that all food brought to the premises is labelled with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the premises, along with a list of **ALL** ingredients.

For instances where food from outside the program is permitted, parents will be provided with a list of currently restricted or prohibited foods for the applicable date(s). All foods provided must be in compliance. Foods not in compliance will be sent home. The list is subject to change without notice based on the enrolment of the program at the time.

Please note that the allergens and allergies list may be changed without notice due to changing circumstances. Please consult with the Program Supervisor if you have any questions.

## ASTHMA & RELATED BREATHING CONDITIONS

An emergency plan is also prepared for children with asthma. The plan must be readily available for staff reference in the case of an emergency. The emergency inhaler must be available whenever a child is in attendance at the program.

Asthma medication is administered as per the prescription medication policy. A medication tracking form must be completed each time an inhaler is used regardless of whether it is assisted or self-administered.

**Children from birth to age 6** are not permitted to self-administer their asthma medication. Parents will provide the inhaler directly to the staff and any required paperwork will be completed. For after school programs only, staff will collect the inhaler from the child.

**Children age 6 and in first grade and turning 6 between September and December** may self-administer with physician's consent on the OCCC forms provided. The child may carry the inhaler on them during program or give it to the staff. Emergency inhalers will not be stored in backpacks or other places where they are not easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

**School age children 7 and in second grade or turning 7 between September and December and older** may self-administer their asthma medication with written parental consent that includes explicit instructions. The child may carry the inhaler on them during program or give it to the staff. Emergency inhalers will not be stored in backpacks or other places where they are not easily accessible in the event of an emergency.

## INDIVIDUALIZED MEDICAL PLANS

Children with an acute or chronic medical condition such that they require additional supports, accommodations or assistance will have an individualized medical plan designed in consultation with the parents and any regulated health care professionals of the parent's choosing. An example of an acute or chronic condition would be diabetes.

These plans include important information on the child's condition, how to use specialized equipment, any additional supports or modifications that are need for inclusion. Individualized medical plans also include the procedures to be followed in the event of a medical emergency. It is vital that parents share this information at the time of registration or as soon as the condition is diagnosed so that proper procedures and training can be put in place for your child's safety.

## ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Whenever possible, medications should be given by parents/guardians at home. Medications will only be administered under conditions when it is absolutely necessary for the child's health.

**Prescription Medication** – Only prescription medication that is in the original packaging with the prescription label, with the child's name, current date, and dosage, may be administered. Doses are given as per the prescription label only.

**Non-Prescription Medication** – The only non-prescription or over-the-counter medications that will be considered for administration are Ibuprofen or Acetaminophen, at centre based programs only, and antihistamines (ie. Benadryl) needed for allergic reactions, as authorized by a physician. Absolutely no other non-prescription medications or over-the-counter medications will be administered including but not limited to naturopathic treatments, homeopathic treatments, and/or vitamins.

**Exceptions** – Other than emergency medications such as inhalers and EpiPens, medications will NOT be given at Thamesford Preschool or any School Age Program. Any exceptions to this are only allowable with the expressed written consent of the Executive Director.

**Administration** – Medications are not given on an “as needed” or “as required” basis under any circumstances. The written instructions must clearly indicate the specific situations and/or symptoms under which the medication can be given.

**Storage** – All maintenance medications are stored in a locked container inaccessible to children at all times and in accordance with the instructions on the label. Emergency medications are kept on the child or the staff while the child is in program.

**Emergency** – In the event of an emergency where medical personnel are called, any incurred expenses are the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND DRILLS

Being prepared for any emergency (for example, fire, tornado, severe weather) is very important. Having a plan in place helps to prepare staff, families and children ahead of a disaster occurring. Each program has an emergency management plan that includes evacuation procedures.

Fire drills are practiced at least once a month with drills for tornadoes and other emergencies practiced quarterly. A designated place of shelter has been assigned to each program in the event that the program must be evacuated due to an emergency (please see below).

During an actual emergency, procedures are in place for safe evacuation and release of children. Please do not attempt to pick your child up while they are en-route to the evacuation centre or before the staff have set up the sign out procedures. It is critical that staff have accurate attendance records and sign out sheets for emergency personnel.

For the majority of emergency situations, parents will be notified by phone call for emergency pick-up. For large scale disaster situations, please check our social media and Heart FM radio.

<b>Ingersoll Children’s Centre</b>	Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute at 37 Alma Street in Ingersoll
<b>Garderie</b>	Holy Trinity Parish at 1420 Devonshire Ave in Woodstock
<b>Thamesford Preschool</b>	Westminster United Church at 115 George Street in Thamesford
<b>Ingersoll Preschool</b>	Ingersoll District Collegiate Institute at 37 Alma Street in Ingersoll
<b>School Age Programs</b>	This information is found on the display board at each program

## GUIDANCE & RELATIONSHIPS

Behaviour guidance is an important part of the relationship that we build with the children in our care. We care about the children, respect their rights, trust the child, and support self-regulation. Rather than



disciplining a child for inappropriate behaviour, we strive to find and understand a reason for the behaviour, guiding the child towards acceptable behaviour. This is an integral part of how children learn.

## PROHIBITED PRACTICES

All staff are expected to comply with the Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014 and regulations concerning behaviour guidance and prohibited practices.

### ***Prohibited practices include:***

- a) corporal punishment of the child;
- b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller 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 himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- c) locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises 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 licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- d) 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;
- e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- g)

## DUTY TO REPORT

All staff of Oxford Community Child Care are required by the Child and Family Services Act, Section 72(5), to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse to the Oxford Children's Aid Society. The College of Early Childhood Educators also places responsibilities on its registered members under the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

Confidentiality of information does not apply when reporting abuse or any reasonable suspicion of abuse to a Children's Aid Society. Staff reporting abuse will be protected from legal action being brought against them unless they have acted maliciously or without reasonable grounds.

## SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORTING

When an incident/accident is deemed a serious occurrence, it is reported to the Ministry of Education. All serious occurrences are handled in accordance to the requirements of the Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014.

### ***"Serious Occurrence" means:***

- a) the death of a child who received child care,
- b) abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care,
- c) a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care,

- d) an incident where a child who is receiving child care goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
- e) an unplanned disruption of the normal operations that poses a risk to the health, safety, or well-being of children receiving child care

Licensed child care operators are required to complete and post a summary of each serious occurrence in a place that is visible and accessible to parents/guardians within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence for a minimum of 10 business days. This summary is called a *Serious Occurrence Notification Form* and will be posted by the child care license.

The *Serious Occurrence Notification Form* will inform parents/guardians on the incident that occurred, the immediate actions taken to respond to the incident, and any longer term actions the operator has taken to minimize the recurrence of the incident. The summary will not include any identifying information to respect the privacy of individuals involved, and shall be updated as new information is obtained. Questions regarding the *Serious Occurrence Notification Form* should be sent to the Supervisor of the program or the Child Care Administrator.

## **ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES**

For more information regarding our policies for AODA, please refer to our website at [www.oxfordccc.ca/policy/](http://www.oxfordccc.ca/policy/) or contact the Accessibility Officer at 519-539-4419.

## **COMPLIMENTS, CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS**

At OCCC, we strive to do things right! If you would like to share a compliment about one of our staff members or a program we've offered, please speak with or email the Supervisor, Team Leader or our Human Resources Coordinator. Little things can make a big difference!

From time to time differences will arise. Let's talk about it.

What can you expect when you have a concern or complaint?

Most concerns can be resolved with open communication. Please speak directly with your child's educator. The educator may not do things exactly the way you would like. That's OK. They are educated in child development, best practices and offering a high quality experience. Give the educator an opportunity to explain. Our Team Leaders/Supervisors are there to guide the process, if needed.

If the matter is financial, the account holder must speak directly to our Parent Accounts Administrator. The Parent Accounts Administrator will only discuss matters with the account holder(s) unless otherwise authorized.

If the concern is not resolved, the parent may speak with the Team Leader/Supervisor. The Team Leader/Supervisor will look at both sides and make a decision based on OCCC policy, legislation, professional regulation, the best interests of the group as a whole and the needs of the family and staff. The Team Leader/Supervisor may access support from senior colleagues before making any decisions.

The majority of concerns/complaints are resolved at this point. If the matter persists, parents may escalate their concern to the Child Care Administrator. Depending on the nature of the concern, parents may be required to submit the details of the concern/complaint in writing. The Child Care Administrator will review the matter with the parent and complete an investigation that may include interviewing the Team Leader/Supervisor and any staff involved. The Child Care Administrator may access support from the leadership team prior to making any decisions.

#### Time Frames for Acknowledgement and Resolution

Every effort is made to resolve issues and concerns promptly, however there is a process that needs to be worked through and that can take time. The initial concern/complaint will be acknowledged immediately whenever possible however acknowledgement may take up to 48 hours. We will make every effort to respond to the concern/complaint as quickly as possible but may take seven (7) to ten (10) days. Dependent on the nature of the concern/complaint and the amount of time required to thoroughly complete the investigative process, a final resolution may take as long as twenty-one (21) days.

Time frames included for acknowledgement, response and/or resolution do not include weekends or statutory holidays. If the matter escalates beyond the Quality Assurance Leader, the response may take up to thirty (30) days or longer depending on the situation.

#### Confidentiality

Concerns and complaints are treated as confidentially as possible however we cannot guarantee that you or your child will not be identified as part of the process. Dependent on the nature of the concern, in order to properly investigate, staff need to be given sufficient details to answer questions accurately and honestly. Even without directly naming, the details may be such that the family and child is identifiable.

Complaint investigations are fair, impartial and respectful. When possible, parents will be informed about what is happening and why along with a high level summary of the outcome. We cannot discuss duty to report circumstances, police investigations or human resources situations including what, if any, disciplinary action was taken. We recognize that it can be frustrating to not know the “whole story” and appreciate your understanding of the limits of disclosure.

#### The Really Tough Situations

Occasionally there may be situations that parents feel strongly enough about to ask for further escalation. In these rare circumstances, the following steps are taken:

- A detailed written account including the requested resolution is submitted to the Executive Director by the parent.
- The Executive Director will review the documentation and further investigate the matter, if deemed necessary.
- The Executive Director will only consider unresolved matters that have attempted resolution at the three previous levels.
- The only exceptions to this are allegations of abuse against a staff member or police investigations.

The Board of Directors will only review parent concerns/complaints of such a serious nature that they require escalation beyond the Executive Director. Concerns submitted directly to the Board of Directors that have not gone through the resolution process will be returned to the parent. Concerns regarding the actions of the Executive Director must be submitted, in detailed writing, to the Board President. When matters reach the Board level, the Board alone will determine if the matter warrants further conversation/investigation and what, if any, action will be taken. The decisions of the Board of Directors are final.

### Allegations of Abuse, Neglect or Mistreatment

If a parent is concerned or suspects that a staff member may be abusive or neglectful, they must contact the Oxford Children's Aid Society and the Executive Director immediately. Once notified, the Executive Director will also make a report to the Oxford Children's Aid Society. In these circumstances, the Oxford CAS are the lead investigators and will complete their investigation first.

The Executive Director will submit a serious occurrence notification to the Ministry of Education and activate any human resources protocols. Only after the CAS has completed their investigation will Oxford Community Child Care and the Ministry of Education do any further investigating and decision making.

Additionally, the Executive Director will make a mandatory report to the College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario if the staff in question is a member of the College.

### Respectful Resolution

Sometimes it can be difficult to see another perspective. It is vital to good relationships and open communication that respectful conduct and conversation occur. Respectful conduct and conversation is expected from all parties.

We will not tolerate any rudeness, aggressive behavior, verbal abuse (including swearing, name-calling or shouting), racism/sexism, threats, tension/fear or harassment towards our staff, students and volunteers including bullying and/or threats of violence. Inappropriate actions or conduct also includes, but is not limited to, written note, email, words, gestures and/or body language and social media.

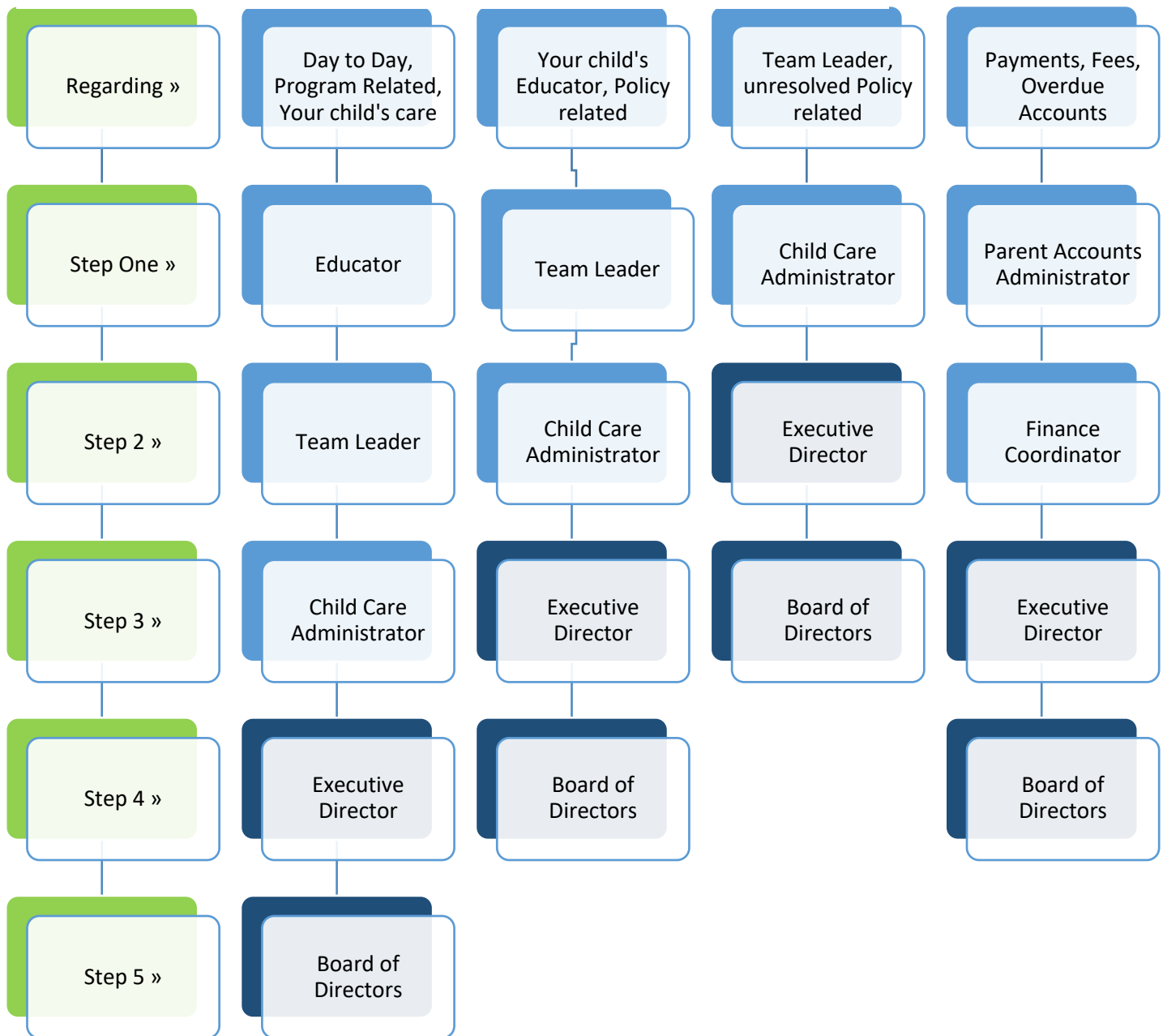
Anyone engaged in inappropriate conduct will be asked to leave the premises immediately; phone calls will be discontinued and e-mails/electronic communications will not receive a response. Parents are responsible for the conduct and behavior of all the people associated with their family and for anyone accompanying them at a program or premise.

In some circumstances inappropriate actions or conduct may result in immediate termination of care without notice and/or contacting the authorities or legal action. No weapons are allowed on any premise or at any program offered by Oxford Community Child Care. The consequences for failure to comply will include, but is not limited to, the family's expulsion from the organization.

It's important for families to understand that consideration is given to legislation and professional regulation, the best interests of the group as a whole, the needs of staff and OCCC policy when reviewing options for resolution. While the parent's requested resolution is considered, the final decision is Oxford Community Child Care's. Complaints do not excuse a family from their financial obligations.

Refer to Chart in Appendix section for Where to Start with a Compliment, Concern or Complaint.

## Where to start with a Compliment, Concern or Complaint



The Executive Director and Board of Directors only review concerns or complaints that have attempted resolution through the steps above. The only exception is in the case of suspected child abuse, neglect or mistreatment which should be brought to the immediate attention of the Executive Director.



## Program Statement

January 1, 2017

Oxford Community Child Care, we believe that children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. We are committed to high quality early learning and care where children learn and grow to become confident, independent and contributing members of our community.



Oxford Community Child Care recognizes and supports *“How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)”* as the document to be used for the purpose of guiding the development of our programs, informing our decisions regarding best practices and building professional capacity in a quality early learning team.

We are in agreement with the Minister’s policy statement that, together with the regulations that guide program development, pedagogy and practice in all child care and early learning settings, *“How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)”* is intended to strengthen the quality of programs and ensure high quality experiences that lead to positive outcomes in relation to children’s learning, development, health and well-being.

All programs offered by Oxford Community Child Care will use observation, reflective practice, critical thinking and a sound knowledge of child development to develop quality experiences for children and families. *“How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)”* is the foundation on which we will build our practice.

## Belonging

**Encourage the development of positive and responsive relationships and interactions.**

**Foster engagement and communication with parents about the program and their children.**

**Involve local community partners to support children, families and staff.**

*CCEYA, Ontario Regulation 137/15, s46(3) b, h, i*

Families matter. Raising children to be responsible, responsive citizens is hard work. Having genuine, open conversations between families and staff makes the job just a little bit easier.

We believe that families want to be involved in their child's day. Work, school and life commitments often make that challenging. Communication between staff and families is vital to creating a community of mutual respect and trust.

OCCC is a teaching facility. We support a variety of post-secondary students in achieving their goals. We also connect with community partners to link families to services. Community partners offer valuable services that complement the programs offered at OCCC.

**Goal:** Create more opportunity for conversations and interactions between staff and parents.

**Approach:** Staff will, at every opportunity, greet parents warmly and directly by initiating conversation and asking about the child. Staff should also ask about the parent and their day while maintaining a professional boundary.

Staff will make connections with families by sharing learning stories and inviting families to share their own stories to enrich the child's experience.

Starting April 1, 2017, OCCC will be piloting the implementation of a communication app between educators and families. The intent is to capture the learning of the child to share with families and build a better connection between the child's experiences and the family's engagement with the program.

**Strategy:** When registering children, staff should spend time with the family, be it in person or on the phone, explaining the program, the concepts, and expectations. Ask questions about what the parent's hopes and dreams for the child are. Be honest and clear about the benefits and limitations of group care.

Three groups in the organization will be selected to pilot the implementation of a communication app to share children's learning and experiences with families for a three month period. At the end of the trial, the staff involved will participate in an assessment of the tool that includes successes, failures, benefits and considerations. The pilot and the assessment will be used to determine the future use of the app and a potential implementation strategy, in stages, across the organization.

**Expectations:** Staff are initiating conversations and making efforts to continue to dialogue with families regularly in a manner that is honest, courageous, polite and respectful. Staff respect professional

boundaries with families by not connecting on personal social media and are very cognizant of the risks and responsibilities of dual relationships in the standards of practice and code of ethics.

## Well-Being

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

*CCEYA, Ontario Regulation 137/15, s46(3) a, g*

Quality practices in health, safety and nutrition are the foundation that well-being is built on.

Being able to identify their individual needs and then understanding how those needs make them feel and function is an important part of growth and healthy development. Building relationships and contributing to a community is a vital part of well-being.

Children are natural born risk takers. Risk in play is an old concept being revisited with new ideas and theories. Being able to assess situations then take risks safely is an integral part of learning by doing. Children who are comfortable with taking risks often become successful and resilient learners.

**Goal:** Health, safety and good nutritional practices are a priority in all OCCC programs.

Children will be supported with learning to identify and articulate their needs and feelings to determine when play is active vs quiet, when rest is needed and for how long, what to eat, how much to eat and for snacks, when to eat.

Educators will learn more about the benefits of risk in play, how to incorporate safe risk into the program, how to assess risk and how to communicate the value of risk in play to families. Programs will transition into allowing for appropriate increased risk in play for children while maintaining safety.

All staff working with children are trained in the Good Beginnings Nutrition Program for Child Care Professionals by June 2017. This is a free, online preschool nutrition course developed by Registered Dietitians in Ontario specifically for child care professionals.

**Approach:** Infants are given the safety and security of loving educators who ensure their needs are met predictably and consistently. These trusting relationships are integral to promote the infant's ability to explore, communicate and achieve developmental milestones.

Toddler aged children, with the guidance and support of the educator, will learn to identify and articulate their needs and feelings. The educator will acknowledge the child's feelings and assist the child with problem solving. This is an important first step towards self-worth and self-regulation.

For Preschool age and older and within the limits of a group, programs and routines will gradually shift to a more open, self-sufficient concept with the educator being a guide to the child's journey.



Handwashing is a proven method of preventing illness. Increased hand washing and using efficient and effective methods will help to reduce the spread of illness. It will also keep the environment cleaner.

Creating an understanding between parents and staff of the value of safe and developmentally appropriate risk that allows for children to explore and engage in the environment.

**Strategy:** Snacks will be available for a longer block of time for children to determine when they want snack, self-serve and then clean up after themselves.

In addition to regular and required handwashing routines, children and adults will be encouraged to wash their hands at non-traditional times like after eating, before toileting and during transitions.

Staff development on what safe risk in play looks like, how to determine what is appropriate risk, how to set boundaries and how to support children in trying new experiences will support the successful implementation of 'risky play' in the programs.

**Expectations:** Genuine relationships are invaluable to the healthy growth, development and overall well-being of children and adults. A daily investment in building relationships with children, parents and extended family, colleagues and community partners is essential.

The environment (both indoor and out) will be scanned for hazards on a regular basis. Potential safety hazards are repaired or removed until repairs can be made.

Snacks and meals will be prepared and served to maximize nutritional content using fresh ingredients and minimal processed foods. Foods and drinks will be presented in a manner that is appealing to children and allows for self-sufficiency.

Communication with families is essential for risky play to be successful. Staff will recognize the comfort of families with the concept of risky play and allow for gradual transitions. Staff will promote the learning and benefits of the child's participation while respecting the family's viewpoint.

## Engagement

**Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.**

**Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.**

**Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.**

**Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into each day, and give consideration to the individual needs of each child.**

*CCEYA, Ontario Regulation 137/15, s46(3) d,e,f,g*

It is through play that children discover how their world works, how materials work, what happens when the environment changes and how their own actions and involvement play an important part in the functioning of the larger community. Involved, focused learning is messy. It's hands-on, involves choices, critical thinking and experimentation. Children need to be immersed in their discoveries. The intensity of their play will make a mess of the environment and of themselves. That's OK. That's expected.

**Goal:** Educators will develop a deeper understanding of provocations and invitations to play to create an environment, both indoor and out, that sparks curiosity and allows for in-depth study of the materials. Days will be organized to allow sufficient, uninterrupted blocks of time for children to engage in learning and with each other. Educators will develop a sense of when to observe, when to augment and support play and, when the play has come to a natural end, to spark curiosity with a new set of provocations to further develop the whole child.

Children will experience pride and responsibility for their play, their learning and for their environments. Children are encouraged and permitted to be self-sufficient by completing tasks for themselves while have calm, understanding support when needed.

**Approach:** Children are provided with a variety of experiences, provocations and invitations. Educators observe, ask questions and build trusting relationships with each child to determine the what, when and how to build the learning experiences provided. Children are encouraged to try new activities, however, the choices the children make are respected. Repetition leads to mastery. When a child is focused on task and meaningfully engaged in the activity and environment, growth and learning happens. Learning stories are regularly shared with families.

**Strategy:** Educators will create environments that are warm, inviting, linked to interests and support independence and self-regulation. Educators will experiment with provocations and invitations to play to find an appropriate balance between child-initiated and adult supported experiences.

Regular, thoughtful documentation will be used to assess children's individual growth and needs.

**Expectations:** Educators ask questions that considers the play the child is engaged in and encourages the child to reflect upon what they are doing and why. Staff will be actively engaged with the children, at their level, to deepen their understanding of the individual child.

Educators are flexible, patient and actively supervising the play at all times. They expect and understand that for every success there will be learning; for every clean and organized room, there will be mess and chaos, and for every child there will be unique needs and contributions to the group.

The same care and consideration to indoor experiences is given to outdoor play.

Educators will reflect on their programs and, in collaboration with their team members, other program staff, and leadership, determine the direction of their program within the values and expectations of the organization.

## Expression

**Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way.**

**Support children in the development of self-regulation.**

*CCEYA, Ontario Regulation 137/15, s46(3) c*

Learning to communicate, negotiate, understand, problem solve and work together is a process. Behaviour and emotions are a part of that learning and important to healthy development. Social skills are developed on an individual continuum that reflects the child's age and stage of development.

Early literacy, in all forms, is critical to healthy development and later school success. Positive communication skills and self-regulation provide children with strong foundation on which to build relationships, create a sense of belonging, general well-being and contribute and engage with the world around them.

**Goal:** Children will be exposed to modelling of good language and social skills by educators that are active co-learners in the environment. Behaviours are expected. Educators consider behaviours from an analytical perspective to ensure learning, growth and that the child's sense of self-worth remains intact.

Educators strive for children to hear more than 2000 words per hour! That's a lot of talking, reading, communicating and interacting. Research shows that the number of *quality, positive* words a child hears in an hour can dramatically impact their future success (2000wordstogrow.ca).

**Approaches:** Children learn to positively interact with others through guided and spontaneous experiences. Educators demonstrate social skills that including asking for assistance, how to negotiate taking turns, problem solving through conflict, and how their actions impact others, the community and the environment. The amount of educator involvement is dependent on the maturity and development of the individual child and on the child's ability at any given time. Children experience a variety of emotions and physical needs like being hungry or tired that will impact on their ability to successfully use the skills they have consistently. Educators are trained to recognize when children are at their best and when a friendly helping hand may be needed.

Educators will support children in learning to recognize emotions and signs of distress before behaviours out of the child's control can occur. They will guide the child to make good choices, articulate their feelings, take responsibility for their actions and recover from overwhelming emotions and behaviours confident with their belonging and that our community is always looking forward.

The environment will be rich in language, books and opportunities to enrich language. Children of all ages enjoy being read to. Staff build on the experiences of books and literature to enrich and extend the play.

**Strategy:** Each program will incorporate an emphasis on literacy and language development. Educators will plan for storytime for younger children and, for older children, time for the educator to read to the group and for children to share their own unique stories.

OCCC educators and staff will receive training on self-regulation and implementing strategies from Calm, Alert and Learning by Dr Stuart Shanker. Dr Shanker is the leading Canadian expert on self-regulation and the connection between stress related behaviour and successful engagement.

**Expectations:** Educators are intentional in their conversations with children, asking open ended questions to encourage back and forth conversation and the development of language.

Educators listen to learn from the children and recognize whose needs are being met with the choices that are made. Educators will develop an awareness of when choices are meeting adult needs over the child's needs and re-focus their attention and programming on the child.

### **Encourage all staff with continuous professional learning.**

*CCEYA, Ontario Regulation 137/15, s46(3) j*

The roles and responsibilities of early childhood educators, early learning and child care workers and support staff are changing. The regulation of ECE's has increased the demands on the educator, provided for a higher standard of professionalism and a strong commitment to continuous professional learning. At OCCC, we believe the new direction of the profession creates a high quality care and early learning experience for children and families.

**Goal:** To create an organizational climate and culture where professional learning is valued and part of a regular and ongoing commitment to each educator and staff's professional identity. Reflective practice and the growth that develops from professional learning requires commitment from the individual staff. We believe cultivating a new climate and culture takes time, investment and a strong belief in our people. OCCC has made great strides towards this goal and is committed to its achievement.

**Approach:** OCCC will continue to support ECE's in their regulated requirement to complete a continuous professional learning portfolio through staff meetings that focus on topics geared towards growth and skill development. Non-ECE staff also have an obligation to understand and be knowledgeable on the issues and industry development that impacts on the Agency and are encouraged to participate by adding their expertise and experiences to the discussion and development of the Agency.

**Strategy:** A staff development program is being piloted with new staff that includes an opportunity for regular reflective discussions with a leadership team member, coaching and readings/videos tailored to the interests and experience level of the individual staff.

**Expectation:** All staff will reach the target of a minimum of 2 professional activities that total 5 hours or more each year.

Opportunities for local professional learning is provided by the Oxford Early Learning Association. Additional opportunities are provided by neighbouring communities. Staff are encouraged to determine their learning needs based on their annual goals and seek opportunities to support the achievement of those goals.



*From How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014*

### **Document and review the impact of the strategies on children and families.**

*CCEYA, Ontario Regulation 137/15, s46(3) k*

Oxford Community Child Care is committed to high quality early learning and care. This commitment requires us to reflect, review and document the impact of our goals and strategies on children and families on a regular basis. We will celebrate our accomplishments, learn from our considerations and make adjustments when needed. The Program Statement will be updated on an annual basis to reflect our growth and learning.

**Goal:** Through regular reflection, staff will document their journey to meet the goals outlined in the program statement along with the benefits and considerations of the strategies used to meet those goals.

**Approach:** At staff meetings, on a quarterly basis at a minimum, time will be allotted for a guided discussion on the achievement and implementation of the program statement. Staff will work within their program teams to allow for the documentation to be reflective of each program offered by OCCC.

**Strategy:** Staff will use their daily documentation and reflections to inform the discussion at the staff meetings. Staff may also be asked to participate in additional small group sessions or feedback surveys.

**Expectation:** Staff are expected to be prepared and to complete thoughtful reflections that demonstrate a thorough understanding of the goals and strategies and the overall statement of the program statement and show their growth and struggles with the implementation.