



A SPECIAL KIND OF PLAY NURSERY SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK
&
PROGRAM STATEMENT

A SPECIAL KIND OF PLAY NURSERY SCHOOL INC.

WELCOME TO SKOP

Welcome to A Special Kind of Play Nursery School (SKOP). We are honoured that you have chosen us to support your child's early learning journey. SKOP serves children between the ages of 2.5 and 5 years across two classrooms. Our centre is built on structure, warmth, exploration, and purposeful learning. We provide an environment where children feel a strong sense of belonging and are encouraged to grow at their own pace. This handbook outlines our philosophy, policies, and expectations so families clearly understand how we work together to provide the highest quality care for your child.

OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Our vision is to be a place of excellence where every child can learn and grow to their fullest potential. Our mission is to provide programming that supports each child's individual needs and strengths, allowing them to participate fully and experience success in all areas of development. We work in partnership with parents and community agencies to enrich children's learning and well-being.

Our values, caring, child- and family-centred care, creativity, uniqueness, partnership, and respect, guide the environment we create and the relationships we build. These principles influence every aspect of our daily work with children and families.

OUR PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

At SKOP, we believe children are competent, capable, curious, and full of potential. Children learn best through meaningful, hands-on experiences that allow them to explore, test ideas, interact with others, and discover new skills. Learning is fostered through play, inquiry, creativity, and real-world experiences. Educators create environments that promote problem-solving, self-regulation, confidence, and meaningful social interactions. Our approach is guided by "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years," rooted in the Four Foundations of Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. These foundations shape our curriculum, routines, and everyday practices.

CWELCC PARTICIPATION

A Special Kind of Play Nursery School Inc. is enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. Through CWELCC, our full daily rate of \$55 is reduced to \$25.99 for eligible children. A \$75 registration fee and a \$250 deposit are required at enrolment. The deposit is applied toward the final two weeks of care when proper written notice is given. CWELCC allows us to offer affordable, accessible childcare while maintaining high standards of quality.

ADMISSION, HOURS & FEES

SKOP accepts children ages 2.5 to 5 and operates Monday to Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Fees must be paid in advance monthly or bi-weekly. Late fees apply to overdue payments, and NSF charges apply to returned payments. There are no discounts for illness, vacation, or absences. One full month of written notice is required for withdrawal; without proper notice, the deposit is forfeited.

Refund Policy

SKOP provides refunds in two situations: when families give one full month of written notice of withdrawal and when overpayments occur. If parents provide the required notice, their deposit is applied to their final two weeks of care, and any remaining credit on the account is refunded. Refunds are also issued immediately when families have overpaid due to billing adjustments or clerical errors. We process refunds promptly after reviewing the account.

SKOP does not operate a traditional waitlist. Families are contacted directly as space becomes available. A late pick-up fee applies when children are collected after closing time and must be paid before the child returns to care.

OUR CURRICULUM & DAILY ACTIVITIES

Our program offers a balance of child-led exploration and educator-supported learning. Children engage in sensory experiences, creative arts, dramatic play, outdoor learning, literacy, numeracy, music, movement, and activities that strengthen emotional and social development. Educators observe children daily and build programming around their interests, developmental needs, and individual strengths. Our classrooms are designed intentionally to promote independence, curiosity, social connection, and meaningful learning.

COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES

SKOP values strong, transparent communication with families. To ensure parents remain connected to their child's day, we send daily videos and photos showing what children are doing, learning, and practicing. These updates show the program plan, the skills children are working on, and the routines experienced throughout the day. Families are encouraged to communicate openly during drop-off and pick-up, or by requesting meetings at any time. Parents may also contact the Supervisor by email at Donna@skoonline.ca. We believe families deserve clear, timely communication and meaningful involvement in their child's learning.

INCLUSION, EQUITY & SUPPORT FOR DIVERSE NEEDS

SKOP is committed to providing an inclusive, respectful environment where every child feels safe and valued. We welcome children of all backgrounds, identities, languages, and abilities. Anti-bias and inclusive practices are embedded in our daily work. For children who require additional support, we collaborate closely with resource consultants, therapists, and community specialists to develop and follow Individual Support Plans (ISPs). Families are included in all decision-making processes to ensure supports are meaningful and effective.

HEALTH, ILLNESS & MEDICATION

The health and safety of every child is essential. Children must remain home if they are unwell and may only return when they have been symptom-free for a full 24 hours. If a child becomes ill while at the centre, families are contacted immediately and must arrange for prompt pick-up; therefore, alternative childcare arrangements must always be in place. Only prescription medication may be administered by staff, and it must be provided in the original labeled container. All allergies must be reported, and SKOP maintains a nut-aware environment.

NUTRITION & MEALS

SKOP provides breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack, all prepared on site in accordance with Canada's Food Guide. Menus rotate every two weeks and accommodate allergies, dietary restrictions, and cultural needs. Water is available throughout the day. Our focus is on nutritious, balanced meals that support children's overall health and well-being.

REST & SLEEP

Children attending for six or more hours are provided with time to rest or engage in quiet activities, depending on their needs. Educators carry out regular visual checks and

document sleep times as required. Cots are individually assigned, bedding is sent home weekly, and any changes in sleep patterns are communicated to families.

SAFETY, SUPERVISION & FIRE DRILLS

Children are supervised at all times and ministry ratios are consistently maintained. Students and volunteers are never counted in ratio and are never left alone with children. SKOP practices regular fire drills to ensure that staff and children are familiar with evacuation procedures. In an emergency, families are contacted directly. Our designated evacuation site is posted on the parent board for easy reference.

SAFE ARRIVAL POLICY

SKOP follows a strict Safe Arrival Policy to ensure children are accounted for and safe from the moment they enter our care. Parents or authorized caregivers must bring their child directly into the classroom each morning and ensure that a staff member has acknowledged the child's arrival. Children may not be dropped off outside, in hallways, or at the door without staff acknowledgment. If a child will be absent, late, or leaving early, parents must notify the centre. If a child has not arrived by their usual time and we have not received communication from the family, staff will contact the parent or guardian to confirm the child's whereabouts. This process ensures that no child goes unaccounted for at any time and that communication between home and school remains consistent and reliable.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE & PROHIBITED PRACTICES

SKOP uses positive, supportive, and developmentally appropriate behaviour guidance practices. We do not permit corporal punishment, harsh or degrading measures, confinement, deprivation of basic needs, physical restraint (except in immediate safety situations), or force-feeding. We focus on helping children develop emotional awareness, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, and self-regulation through calm, respectful interactions.

DUTY TO REPORT

Under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act (CYFSA), all staff are legally required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect directly to the Children's Aid Society. This responsibility cannot be delegated or delayed. The safety and protection of every child is taken seriously at SKOP.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS, STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS

We work collaboratively with community partners, including resource consultants, early intervention teams, and health professionals, to support children's learning and development. SKOP also welcomes students and volunteers as part of their training experience. All students and volunteers must complete an orientation, submit required documentation, and remain supervised by staff at all times.

FIELD TRIPS & WALKS

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year, and families receive advance notice and must sign separate consent forms for each outing. Neighbourhood walks occur with the general consent provided during enrolment.

PARENT ISSUES & CONCERNS

We encourage families to communicate concerns openly and promptly. All issues are addressed respectfully and responded to within three business days. If a concern remains unresolved, it may be escalated to the Ministry of Education or other regulatory bodies as appropriate. Our goal is to maintain open communication and work collaboratively toward positive solutions.

HOLIDAYS & CLOSURES

SKOP closes for statutory holidays including New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day. Updated closure schedules are shared with families annually.

FINAL REMARKS

Thank you for choosing A Special Kind of Play Nursery School. We look forward to partnering with your family and supporting your child's growth, learning, and success throughout the year. Together, we can create a joyful, safe, and enriching early learning experience.