

GERRARD EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

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Parent Handbook

Gerrard Early Learning Centre

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[1. Welcome to Gerrard Early Learning Centre \(the “Centre”\)](#) [Philosophy](#)

We believe that a child’s early years set the foundation for life-long learning in all developmental areas. Our Centre is committed to provide a well-rounded, play-based program that meets the ever growing and changing needs of a child’s development. The Center provides opportunities to the children that attend to have social contact, creative expression and exploration.

We provide a curriculum where children have the opportunity to make choices, practice and learn skills, and express themselves. Our program covers a wide range of topics including science, language, music, drama, arts, crafts, building, physical play and excursions.

We feel that ongoing communication with the families is of critical importance. Staff and families work together to create a secure, loving and happy environment for the child. We promote the multicultural nature of our families, and nurture and preserve different heritage and cultures.

Our committed and knowledgeable Registered Early Childhood Educators with diverse backgrounds enhance the learning experiences of the children in their care and their families in which we serve.

[2. Program Statement](#)

Our Centre offers a program that is consistent with the Ministry’s Policy Statement on programming, pedagogy and curriculum. The ministry documents we reference in our program include the following:

- Early Learning For Every Child Today (E.L.E.C.T)
- How Does Learning Happen! Ontario’s Pedagogy For Early Years
- Think Feel Act: Lessons From Research About Young Children

We believe that the early years of a child’s development set the foundation for life-long learning in all developmental areas. The premise of our framework believes that children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Our centre provides a program in which children have the opportunity to make choices, learn and practice skills and express themselves.

We promote health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children by ensuring that the guidelines set out by Toronto Public Health, Canada Health and Food Guide and the Centre’s Nutritionist are followed. We provide daily opportunities for children to be physically active and to explore with their body, mind and senses. We incorporate opportunities for the children to build and practice self-help skills. We also provide healthy meals and snacks.

Our centre supports positive and responsive interactions with, and among the children, parents and staff by modeling appropriate interactions and reactions and encouraging on-going communication. We believe in building partnerships with the families in our centre in order to give the best care to the children. We always welcome families’ views in the centre as they are viewed as experts of their children.

We provide opportunities in which the children can interact and communicate in positive ways and we model appropriate interactions with children, families and staff. The children are presented with positive

options and solutions and are given the personal space needed to reflect in order to build their ability to self-regulate.

We foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by providing enticing materials that sparks their natural curiosity, by asking open ended questions and by giving them the time needed to explore their environment. We believe in and promote both child-initiated and adult-supported experiences and we facilitate this by following the lead of the children, providing meaningful opportunities and materials the children are interested in. Our staff follows the children's interest, records observations and uses them in planning activities for the group or an individual child. Children are free to explore through activities, including adult lead experiences, to further enhance their interests, using all opportunities as teachable moments.

Our staff strives to provide a positive learning environment and to create experiences that support each child's learning and development which is inclusive to all children including children with individualized plans. Our program provides a wide range of topics including science, language, music, drama, arts/crafts, building, and physical play and is based on observing the children's interests, needs and strengths. We develop a weekly program with learning opportunities for both group and individual needs. Our Centre is committed to providing a well-rounded, play-based program that meets the ever growing and changing needs of a child's development and where all children are encouraged to engage in meaningful play and express themselves freely in any form.

Our spacious, well equipped playground is surrounded by trees and nature and provides great opportunities for outdoor active play as well as a quiet reflection. Our indoor space provides an environment for language, science, music, drama, arts and crafts, as well as many spontaneous activities.

We accommodate children's rest and quiet time by providing age appropriate cribs and cots, enhancing the sleep and rest experience by providing soft music and dimmed lighting. While addressing and supporting the needs of the group, our staff continuously interacts with individual children facilitating their needs and requirements.

We strive to foster outreach, engagement, and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children's learning experiences. We believe families know their children best and that sharing information is essential to the success of the child. Respect, trust, empathy and integrity are essential values in all our interactions with families.

Families are invited to participate in our program, share their ideas and have input on their children's interests. They are invited to contribute to our monthly staff meetings and have the option of receiving the weekly program by email or by photocopy. The staff can arrange times to meet with families to discuss strategies, child development or other concerns. All meetings with families are documented in the classroom Log Book or in the individual child's portfolio when addressing developmental needs.

The meetings also provide an opportunity for families to review the impact of the strategies set out in our Program Statement on them and their children. We encourage families to share their views on our Program Statement and our performance and strategies used when implementing it, in an open dialogue as well as by placing comments in our Communication Logs. Each classroom teacher will record parents' comments and present them at the monthly staff meetings and any comments will be discussed and reviewed and incorporated into the program.

In order to ensure that the strategies set out in our Program Statement have been effective on the children and their families, we ask all parents to fill out our annual Parent Feedback Survey. The survey will provide us with the inside to how we can improve, change or adjust our program and provide the best

quality care for children. Parents who are unable to provide feedback on the written survey are always welcome to join our “parents’ program statement review” at the Parent Committee Meetings.

Parenting literature, safety and health related resources, and the curriculum are available in each classroom for parent use.

We are committed to involving local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff. We support our community by providing learning opportunities and practical work experiences to volunteers and students on placement. We invite a variety of community workers such as police officers, fire fighters and community workers to our centre to enhance the children’s learning. We have built an ongoing relationship with the resource staff and use the service for consultation and support. Our children visit the local library regularly and the story reading librarian enhances our infant, toddler and preschool program at least once a year. We believe the community is a vital learning tool and it provides real life experiences for the children. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 all these activities and physical contacts are canceled, and children will not be participating in community visits, or field trips until further notice. Our relationship with the resource staff has changed and the observations of children and consultations with parents and staff are done virtually. We are using technology to connect with parents, the local library and other community partners during this time.

Our committed and well trained staff uses their knowledge, experience, diverse background and heritage to enhance the learning experiences of the children in their classrooms. We believe that learning never ends and therefore we seek out and offer opportunities for on-going training to staff including workshops, seminars, mentoring or other forms of professional development. These professional development programs, minimum two per year, can be chosen by or for staff and should be relevant to the area in which the staff needs professional growth. These programs empower staff to contribute and progress their classrooms.

Our centre recognizes that pedagogical documentation is a way for our program staff to learn about how children think and learn. The observations staff document are used to further the children’s learning as well as to reflect and monitor appropriate development as the children grow. The documentation is also used to keep an open and ongoing dialogue with families about their children’s experiences and development.

Centre’s Program Statement is reviewed, approved and signed off by Centre’s Management annually and at any time when changes are made.

The Program statement and the Implementation of the Program Statement is reviewed and signed off with all staff, students and volunteers before any interactions with children, annually and at any time it is modified.

[3. Program Statement Implementation](#)

Our Centre’s staff is required to recognize and honor the Code of Ethics set out by the College of Early Childhood Educators, as well as to become familiar with the Early Learning for Every Child Today – A frame work for Ontario early childhood settings and How Does Learning Happen? - Ontario’s Pedagogy For Early Years. These documents as well as the Centre’s Policies, Program Statement and the Program Statement Implementation Policy set out the guidelines for staff how to conduct themselves as professionals, how to build and nurture relationships in inclusive settings, how to support various behaviours, and how to provide safe, healthy and supportive learning environment in our Centre.

Prohibited Practices

The Centre does not permit or tolerate under any circumstances:

- a. Corporal punishment of a child (which may include but is not limited to, hitting, spanking, slapping, pinching).
- b. Physical restraining of a child such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purpose 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 Centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency.
- d. Use of harsh, degrading, measures or threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
- e. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, toilet use, clothing or bedding.
- f. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Contravention of the prohibited practices

Observations will be conducted by the Supervisor/Director on an ongoing basis to monitor the prohibited practices. The monitoring tool will be used to record the prohibited practices and address them with the employees, students and volunteers.

If Prohibited Practices are observed the following steps are followed:

- Immediate dismissal without pay.
- Parents will be notified.
- Report to the College of Early Childhood Educators.
- Report to Children's Aid Society (if applicable).
- If required, the supervisor will provide a report to a Centre's program advisor by entering the information about the occurrence on the Child Care Licensing Information System (CCLS) at <http://earlyyears.edu.gov.on.ca/ChildCareWeb/public/login.xhtml> and follow the serious occurrence procedure.

In order to ensure that the centre's staff, volunteers and students are following the centre's policies, Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation Policy, the following procedure have been implemented:

- All staff, students and volunteers must read, agree upon and sign off Centre's Policies, Program Statement and the Program Statement Implementation Policy before commencement of employment or placement, or when any changes have been made to these policies and annually thereafter.
- Supervisor or Director will randomly observe staff, student and volunteer in the classroom, will monitor their performance, and complete and sign off on the "Monitoring tool for the compliance and contravention of the Program

Statement". Any non-compliance items cited will be documented and addressed for improvement and compliance.

- Any staff, student or volunteer that observe any physical or emotional mistreatment of a child, by an adult in the daycare has a moral and legal obligation to contact the supervisor of the Centre and report it to the Children's Aid Society as per Centre's Child Abuse policy.
- If the supervisor is the person contravening the policy (ies) they must be reported to the management team.

Contraventions of the Program Statement

If a contravention of the Program Statement occurs the supervisor will meet with Staff/Student/Volunteer to discuss it. The Program Statement, Program Statement Implementation Policy will be reviewed, recorded and signed off and issues resolved before commencing work. The supervisor will observe semi-monthly at random and monitor staff for a reoccurrence.

Reprimanding Procedures are as followed:

- **Instance one:** Verbal warning - the supervisor/designate will meet with the staff to discuss the issue. The staff will be required to read and sign the centre's Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation policy as needed. The supervisor/designate will monitor staff performance on ongoing basis.
- **Second time:** Written warning – the supervisor/designate will meet with the staff again to discuss the issue. The staff will be required to read and sign again the centre's Program Statement and Program Statement Implementation policy. The supervisor/designate may request for staff to attend a workshop, seminar or other form of professional development that may enhance the knowledge in the particular subject.
- **Third time:** Dismissal without any pay – The licensee, director, or supervisor will meet with the employee where automatic dismissal without pay will commence.
- If the student/volunteer is the person contravening the policy, the supervisor will meet with student /volunteer and their placement will be terminated.

Written records of staff performance, meetings and outcome of the meetings will be documented and records will be kept on file for a minimum of three years.

Centre's Program Statement and the Program Statement Implementation Policy are reviewed, approved and signed off by Centre's Supervisor/Management annually and at any time when changes are made.

4. Confidentiality

Our Centre respects the privacy of the families and will not release any information about families and children enrolled. Staff and management understand that they will receive and have access to confidential information about children and their families. They agree to keep this information in the strictest of confidence.

Parents sign a consent form as part of the registration package to consent to us sharing information with the Ministry, the City, staff of the Center and the resource staff consultant.

There are agencies like, the police department, children's aid society or public health that may access a child's file without prior notification and gain access to personal family or child's information. At any time that a child's file is accessed by the authorities, parents will be notified.

5. Wait list policy and procedure

The Centre maintains a wait list for all interested families. Parents or guardians are required to provide contact and child(ren) information in order to be placed on the wait list. The wait list is organized monthly (by the date childcare is required). Parents need to choose a month they will require care and remember which month they have chosen. If parents choose to change this date they are required to inform the Centre to update the wait list.

Priority for placement is determined according to the date the parents or guardians called requesting childcare. When a space becomes available the Centre will call all families interested in the spot.

The space is given to the first parent or guardian who commits to taking the available spot. Placement of a child on the waiting list is free of charge.

The Centre places new children as enrolled children leave the Centre and spots become available. The Centre requires only two week notice for withdraw of an enrolled child. As a result, the placement of children is driven by the Centre's needs and availability which is based on the specified age groups and the needs to fill space in the Centre. Children already enrolled in the Centre have priority over new enrollments when graduating from one age group to another.

If the Centre does not have space to offer once the month arrives for which the family requested a spot, the family may choose to stay on the list and keep their priority. The parents or guardian are responsible for informing the Centre that they are still interested in a spot in the future.

Parents are encouraged to check-in with the Centre two months prior to the date they indicated they want a spot. Parents will be updated based on information known to the Centre at that time. However, please keep in mind that enrolled children are only required to give a two week notice.

We strive to keep families together and therefore priority is given to families who already have children or family in the Centre. If you have twins it may be necessary to enroll one child first and then wait for the next available spot for the other. The other child will be on a priority wait list until a spot becomes available.

Often potential parents call to be placed on the waiting list prior to the birth of a child. The parents are required to email or call back informing the Centre that the child was in fact born and to provide the child's name and date of birth in order to be considered for the wait list.

Parents may inquire about their child's status on the waiting list at any time. The list will be made available to them so that they can see their child's position on the waiting list. The names and information of other families will be blocked out in order to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it.

The wait list policy and procedure is reviewed with employees prior to employment, annually and whenever there is a change to the policy. The policy is reviewed with students and volunteers prior to placement, annually and whenever there is a change to the policy.

6. Admission and Withdrawal policy

Admission

Prior to enrolling a child into the Centre, the supervisor will schedule two separate meetings with parents/guardians.

1. Supervisor will meet the parents/guardians with their child/ren for a tour of the Centre. Subsequently, parents will be given Center's Enrollment package to fill out at home and centre's Parent Handbook to read and sign.
2. Supervisor will meet with the parent/guardian in order to complete enrolment package. This includes:
 - Entering detailed information in the enrolment forms including phone numbers, postal codes, child needs, interests, abilities, etc.
 - Ensuring all consents are well understood and signed
 - Reviewing the Parent Handbook
 - Submitting the child's immunization record
 - Informing the parents about the centre's discharge policy and procedure

At this time, the above will be performed via phone calls or emails.

During both meetings parents/guardians have the opportunity to ask questions regarding the placement and the centre. When the enrolment package is completed and returned and a deposit has been paid, the parents/guardians will be given the code to the center's security system.

Withdrawal

Parents/Guardians are required to give the Centre paid notice of no less than 2 weeks in writing prior to withdrawal of their children. In the case of a no-notice withdrawal the 2 weeks deposit will be forwarded to cover the no-notice withdrawal.

1. The supervisor may request withdrawal of a child due to behavioral concerns when:
 - the safety of the child, the safety of the other children or staff is endangered and incidences have been documented, or
 - all help from outside agencies available to the child have been used and the Centre determines that the child's needs cannot be met.

The supervisor will discuss the situation with management and then call the city consultant along with the resource staff to inform them about the centre's next step(s) (i.e. instant withdrawal, withdrawal with notice, reduced hours of care) and seek their help in finding a suitable facility for the child or where appropriate may transfer or refer the child to private home daycare or other agencies.

2. In the case where the Centre meets the child's needs, but does not meet the parents/guardians needs, the centre may also withdraw the child. Parents will be notified and a meeting between parent(s), staff and supervisor will be held. If problem is not resolved the parent(s) will be served the notice of withdrawal.
3. The oldest preschooler may be ask to leave the Centre, if they can find alternate care, before entering their school program, when the oldest children in the infant or toddler

classroom are required to move up (18 months and 30 months). Parents may be asked at that time to sign a written confirmation stating the day and month their child will be leaving the Centre. During that time the graduating toddlers/infants may remain in their classroom for the time that is approved by the City/ Ministry. If the approval is not granted the oldest preschooler may be withdrawn from the program. Subsidy and full fee families will pay the fee that is required for the classroom the child is in. At time the classroom may change into a mix or older age group consistent with our license to accommodate growing children. The Centre will take every step possible to accommodate the families who may be affected by the withdrawal by providing:

- List of Licensed Child Care Centers in the neighborhood
- West End Home Childcare brochure

4. The Centre has the right to terminate child care service at any time provided the parents/guardians are given proper written notice (1 month). Should the parent/guardian find alternate care for the child during this notice period the centre will waive the regular required notice.
5. Should the supervisor/director of the program determine that your behaviour as a parent/guardian or your child's behaviour interferes with or is disruptive to the daily operations of the centre, or is harassing, intimidating or of an abusive nature to the staff, other parents/guardians or children of the center, the supervisor/director of the program may terminate this agreement and withdraw your child from the program without notice.

7. Enrollment/ Fees/Attendance and Fee Amendment

Upon a parent's/guardian's inquiry call the child's information will be placed on the waiting list. When space becomes available, the child's parent/guardian at the top of the waiting list will be called to come in with their child to meet the Supervisor to discuss the needs of their child and to complete enrollment papers. As part of a child's enrollment into child care, and before the child starts attending, parents/guardians must read, fill out and sign the enrollment papers, including the Parent Handbook, and provide us with an updated immunization record.

All families are required to pay their child care fees for everyday of the week regardless if the child is absent, sick, or on vacation. For subsidized children, the amount of your fee for services will be given to you from Toronto Children's Services before you start child care and whenever your fee changes after that. For full fee children, the fee amount for services is provided to you before you start and is included in with this handbook, posted in the front hallway and on our website.

You must notify the supervisor that you are extending your vacation or else your child will be withdrawn from the program. Your child may be re-admitted pending there is a space available. The centre is not accountable if you lose your child's space due to an unannounced extension of vacation.

There will be no reduction of fees for statutory holidays or occasional absences and the fee may be increased at any time with proper notice (one month). Post dated cheques, cash or money orders are acceptable for payment. If an account is overdue more than 15 days the centre may choose to withdraw the child unless otherwise notified. All families must pay their child care fees by the first week of every month. Please note that a \$30.00 administration charge will be applied for N.S.F. cheques.

Fee payments can be paid through one of the following options:

- 1) E-transfer through gerrardfees@gmail.com
- 2) Cheque/Money Order - payable to Gerrard Early Learning Centre
- 3) Cash Payment – in person

A tax receipt will be issued annually for all child care fees paid from the previous calendar year.

A non-refundable registration fee of \$30.00 is required before your child is enrolled into the program. You will also be required to pay a 1-week deposit upon enrollment.

Each child with a fee subsidy is allowed up to 35 absent days per calendar year. The parent/guardian is responsible for the assessed fees when the child is absent. If the child is absent for more than 35 days, the parent/guardian is responsible for paying the full cost of care. Statutory holidays will be excluded from the 35 days. Requests for additional days of absence, beyond the 35 allowable days may be approved by the subsidy office through the appeal process. Appeals will be considered for exceptional cases only such as when a child has a documented special needs or serious illness.

Consequently, the centre requires that you pay a one week's full fee deposit once your child has been absent 30 days. When you reach the 35 days you will be requested to pay for the absent days up on your return to the day care. The centre has the right to cancel care for your child if you refuse to pay the deposit or daily fee promptly.

In order for the children to progress and succeed, sustain smooth routines and transitions, and to achieve goals set by parents and staff, children should attend child care regularly.

Child Care Fee Schedule

We are pleased to share that Gerrard Early Learning Centre has enrolled in the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System between the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada. As part of the agreement, we are pleased to offer fee reductions. Our first step is to reduce childcare base fees per eligible child by 25% April - December 2022 and 52.75% as of January to a minimum of \$12 per day.

Fee reduction through the CWELCC is for children under six years old (any child who turns 6 years old between January 1 and June 30 in a calendar year), retroactive to April 1, 2022. This means that we will be providing you with a rebate on your fees equal to the amount of the decrease to which you are entitled to between April 1, 2022 and October 31, 2022. The rebates will be applied to fees no later than 20 days from the time we receive the funding.

The following chart is the base fees for all the families. GELC charges a non-base fee for late pick-ups (see late pick fee section). For subsidized families, your assessed parental fee and the reduction to the assessed parental fee will be shared by Children's Services; the rebate is based on the calculation from the City of Toronto.

	INFANT 0 month -1.5 years	TODDLER 1.5 years -2.5 years	PRESCHOOL 2.5 years - 6 years
Base fee	\$92	\$84	\$71
New fee with 25% reduction 2022	\$69	\$63	\$53.25
New fee with additional 37% reduction 2023	\$43.47	\$39.69	\$33.55

The Ontario childcare fee subsidy program will also continue to be available for eligible families.

As we move forward, we will continue to communicate more details to you. If you would like more information about the CWELCC System, please visit:

<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/community-partners/early-learning-child-care-partners/canada-wide-early-learning-child-care-agreement-cwelcc/>.

8. Days and Hours of Operation

The Centre is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 7:30am and 6:00pm. Unless other arrangements have been made, children will not be accepted after 10:00 a.m.

Due to safety reasons, once your child's group leaves the centre for a walk or field trip, staff is not permitted, under any circumstances, to release or accept your child. You must drop off or pick up your child before or after the walk or outing.

When the group leaves the centre premises your child will not be accepted into another classroom. You are responsible for looking after your child until their group returns which will be around 11:00a.m. If you want to pick up your child and they are on a walk or outing you must return to the centre and wait for your child's group to return.

Children will also not be accepted in the classrooms at lunch and sleep time from 11:30am to 2:30 in order to eliminate classroom disruption during a busy routine and sleep-time.

The centre will be closed on the following days: New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and Boxing Day. The centre will be open half a day on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

9. Arrival and Departure

If your child is sick, please call the office before 10:00 a.m to inform us of their absence.

Each child must be accompanied by an adult to and from the centre. Staff must be notified and made aware that a child has arrived. Children must be escorted by the parents to their classroom or the playground and the parent must inform the teacher that their child has arrived. Verbal contact must be made. Do not leave children outside or in the hallways without supervision. This is extremely unsafe.

When parents pick up their children they must alert the staff member that they are leaving the centre with the child. Verbal contact must be made. At this point the centre is no longer responsible for your child.

A child will only be released to a parent or guardian. Both parents/guardians have the right to see or to pick-up their child unless there is a written Court Order submitted to the centre prohibiting this.

Arrangements can be made to allow another adult to pick up a child, provided that the centre receives written notice or verbal permission. Proper identification will be required at time of pick up by anyone other than parents or legal guardian. A telephone call is acceptable if the parent's voice can be identified on the telephone. Anyone picking up a child must be at least 16 years of age.

Parents are not to re-enter the premises after the centre has closed for the day (6:00pm). All Strollers must be folded for storage in the shelter during the day. Parents are advised not to leave strollers on the premises overnight. Parents are also not permitted to pick up strollers after the centre has closed for the day. The centre does not accept responsibility for loss, stolen or damaged strollers nor their contents.

Late pickup fees will be charged to anyone arriving after 6:00pm. If a child is not picked up by 7:00pm and no one can be reached, The Children's Aid Society will be notified.

Late pick up – Late Fee

The late fee schedule is as follows:

- \$5.00 for the first minute and \$1 for every minute after that.
- The late fee payment goes directly to the staff that stayed behind with the child and it is not tax deductible.
- If three or more times late the child could be withdrawn from the program.
- The day care clock is the time used to determine the late payment. Late fees not paid within 48 hours are added to your statement.
- At 7 p.m., if we have not heard from you or we have not been able to reach you or your emergency contacts, the children's Aid Society will be notified.
- Staff on duty will complete a late fee payment form, which is to be signed by the parent/guardian. By signing the form the parent/guardian acknowledges that they are late and agrees to the amount due. The fee is payable to the staff member(s) on duty.

10. Children's Outings

When weather permits, children will be going on daily outings, walks to parks, playgrounds, libraries etc. Occasionally and in some of these outings public transportation may be used.

Children must be dressed appropriately for current weather conditions. For example, in the winter all children are required to wear waterproof, warm boots, a winter coat, waterproof mittens and a warm hat. All children must have a pair of indoor shoes. In the summer all children must wear proper running shoes that are comfortable while on trips and excursions. All children must have sunscreen and wear a hat everyday while at the centre. These will protect them from the hot sun.

All children that attend the centre for six or more hours should spend at least two hours a day outdoors. If a child is not well enough to be outdoors they should not attend and will not be accepted in the centre.

Children will not be going outside in the winter when the windchill is -15C (-28F) or less. In the summer, children will not be going outside when the temperature is 35C (95F) or greater and the air quality index is 5 or more. Alternative, indoor activities will be planned for these occasions and the outdoor time may be change (early in the morning or late in the afternoon) or the time spend outdoor may be reduced.

11. Nutrition- Lunch, Snacks and Allergies

The Centre provides 1 hot lunch and 3 snacks per day. Ontario grown foods are used whenever possible and at least one dark green or orange vegetable/fruit is served each day. Our Menu meets the nutritional recommendations of Health Canada and is approved by a Registered Dietitian and Nutrition Consultant. Menus are posted in every classroom and it is sent to parents through Himama. A sample of the menu is on the Centre's website. Our menu includes alternative meals for children with allergies or food sensitivities to avoid outside food in the classrooms.

It is very important for us to know your child's allergies and food restrictions in order to accommodate your child's needs. Parents/guardians with anaphylactic children must:

- Provide the Centre with an EpiPen.
- Provide an emergency Anaphylactic Treatment Procedure for their child signed by them and their child's doctor.
- Provide training for their child's emergency procedure for all staff prior to their child's enrollment.
- In cases where a child has food allergies and the meals and snacks provided by the child care centre cannot meet the child's needs, ask the child's parent to supply nutritional snacks/meals in accordance to Canada's Food Guide for their child. All written instructions for diet provided by a parent will be implemented.

All infant food and formula should be pre-measured from home and must be in labeled containers or bottles.

NO OTHER FOOD is allowed into the centre from the outside for any other age group. On Friday, the centre will bake a cake to celebrate the children's birthdays for that week. Please ensure you inform your child's teacher of your child's birth date.

12. Behaviour Guidance Policy

Our staff provides a program that supports positive interactions, between children, families, staff and communities as set out in our Program Statement. On occasion when behavior guidance is required, correcting behaviours will take the form of positive guidance, re-direction and the establishment of well-defined limits which will occur at the time of the incident.

The following methods of direct and indirect correcting behaviours will be used:

1. Redirecting (suggesting an alternative activity or space)
2. Using positive statements ('I need you to sit on the chair' instead of 'stop standing on the chair')
3. Choices and Logical Consequences (i.e. Lose the privilege of the activity for the day)
4. Reasoning
5. Positive Feedback ('way to go', 'good for you', 'keep up the good work')

By signing this agreement you:

Understand that your child's enrollment is conditional during the adjustment period. If the program is having difficulty meeting your child's needs we will use every resource available to us to assist them in their adjustment. Parents/Guardians are required to sign and agree to an

assessment and to support services that will be put in place within a timely manner. Parents/Guardians must agree to be involved by attending any required meetings. The Centre will also inform its consultant about the process. With the help of the assigned resource consultant we will determine the individual child's needs and individual support plan (ISP) will be put in place to address these needs.

[13. Individualized plans \(IP\) for children with medical and non –medical needs](#)

Our centre provides an inclusive program and is responsive to different needs of children. It is very important to share the information about your child's need at the time of enrollment and assist us in developing the individualized plan (IP) to address the medical or non-medical needs of the child.

The IP outlines detailed strategies in dealing with medical and non-medical prevention, support and emergency, as well as sets out goals for a specific child and actively involves the parent/guardians, medical staff, Centre staff and resource staff in order to support and benefit the child.

[14. Parent/Guardian Involvement policy](#)

Parents/Guardians are invited to participate in the centre's activities in many ways. Parents/Guardians may volunteer, bring in creative art supplies for the art centers, share a special talent, or join our parent Board of Directors or one of its committees. We invite families to visit the centre at anytime as long as the visit is not disruptive to your child or the program.

Parents/Guardians are required to attend meetings to discuss their child's progress and development.

We welcome Parents/Guardians contribution to our monthly staff meetings including their ideas, comments and concerns.

We invite parents to visit our website: highparkearlylearningcentre.com to learn more about our Centre and services we provide as well as to fill out our "Parent Feedback Survey". Centre will follow the policies and procedures set out in the Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure to ensure its transparency and compliance.

[15. Parents Issues and Concerns](#)

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the Licensee and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [Toronto Children's Aid Society](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx) (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

For more information, visit

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may bring the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the supervisor/administrator. If the response of the supervisor/administrator is not to your satisfaction, parents/guardians may direct their complaint or concern to the Centre's Executive Director.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom staff directly <p>when the classroom staff's response is not to your satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 10 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail.</p> <p>Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the name of the person who received the issue/concern; - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
<p>Staff-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or licensee. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within two business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor and/or licensee. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Contacts:

Site Supervisor: Wei Wei Wang - 416-926-2208

Director: Jim Tsatsos – 416-516-4112

Licensee Contact(s): Robert Atkins– (647) 330-9581

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

16. [Illness](#)

Children that are sick should not attend the centre for their own protection, the protection of other children and staff. Any child who is too sick to participate in any indoor or outdoor activities must not attend. When a child is ill and cannot attend on any current day the centre should be informed by phone.

Any communicable diseases such as strep throat, mumps, chicken pox, whooping cough must be reported to the centre as soon as possible so that we can notify other parents and take other precautionary measures. It is in the best interest of everyone that your child stays home and seeks doctor's advice when he/she has one of the following symptoms: a cold, sore throat, an earache, discharge from eyes and ears, swollen neck glands, an unexplained rash or skin eruption or any other communicable diseases. In these cases, the child can return to the centre accompanied by a doctor's note stating that the child is ready to come back to the centre and is not contagious.

The centre's staff has the right to refuse care to a child who is too sick to be at the centre. Public health regulations take priority in any communicable disease situation as we must follow proper procedure. These procedures may not necessarily be consistent with your doctor's advice. A fever is the body's way to fight off infection or a virus. Therefore, children with a fever (100.4 F or 38 C) must not attend the centre for their protection, the protection of other children and staff. A child must be free of fever without the use of fever reducing drugs such as ibuprofen (Advil) or acetaminophen (Tylenol).

If a child should become sick while at the centre, exhibiting signs of illness, vomiting, having excessive diarrhea and/or fever, parents will be called to pick up their child as soon as possible. Parents will be notified upon the first loose bowel movement or vomiting and will be asked to pick up the child upon the second one. If a child has a fever of 38C and 100.4 F or more the parent of the child will be notified. In the case of diarrhea, vomiting or fever, a child can return to the centre 24 hours after the symptoms disappear. It is advisable that parents prepare and arrange for an alternate or emergency person who can pick up your child when you are unable to.

17. [Medication](#)

Only RECE staff is allowed to administer medication to the children, in accordance with the instructions on the label and the Parent/Guardian Authorization Form. The classroom RECE will notify the supervisor about all medications administered to the children.

If prescription medication is to be administered to the child, it must be in its original prescription container, clearly labeled with the child's name, the doctor's name, the name of the medication, the dosage required to be administered, the expiry date and instructions for storage and administration. Medication will not be given to a child in milk or within food.

A Parent/Guardian Authorization Form must be filled out by the parent/guardian of a child for each new prescription before medication can be administered. The parent/guardian must give their child's RECE teacher specific, written instructions consistent with the prescription including a written schedule for the administration of the medicine and a signed authorization form provided by the Centre.

Non-prescription medications (i.e. fever reducers, Advil, Tempera etc.) will only be given if a parent has written consent by a physician. The parent/guardian must give their child's RECE teacher specific, written instructions consistent with the prescription/doctor's note including a written schedule for the administration of the medicine on a signed authorization form provided by the centre. Classroom Staff can administer over the counter products like: sunscreen, moisturizing skin lotion, lip balm, insect repellent, hand sanitizer and diaper cream. Parents need to fill out the authorization form and to ensure that these products are labelled with the child's name, storage, and administration instructions. Record of administration of the products are not required. All products will be administered from the original container or package.

In case of an emergency situation, staff will gather all non-prescription medication, if possible, with accordance to the Centre's Emergency Management Policy and Procedures.

18. Serious Accident/Occurrence

If a child has a serious accident, he/she will be taken to the nearest hospital immediately. Parents/ Guardians will be notified by the centre to meet the child at the hospital. In a situation that is considered a serious occurrence, a report will be completed, signed and submitted to the licensing authorities as a form of notification.

If a child has a minor accident, First Aid will be applied. The teacher will fill out an Injury Report Form for parents to acknowledge and sign. A copy of the report will be given to the parents.

In case of emergency situation on premises, the Centre will follow the Emergency Management Policy and Procedures and report the occurrence when required.

Posting of Serious Occurrence Notification Form

A Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be completed by the supervisor to communicate information to parents/guardians about the serious occurrence that occurred in the centre. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted within 24 hours of the occurrence on the bulletin board at the entrance next to the day care license for 10 business days from its last update.

Note: In case of the allegations of abuse, the form will not be posted until:

- a. CAS has completed the investigation and concluded verification or not of alleged abuse.
- b. If CAS has determined that they will not investigate the allegation.
- c. The ministry has investigated any associated licensing non compliances.

19. Child Abuse

Every childhood educator who in the course of his/her profession or official duties, has reason to suspect that a child has suffered or is suffering from abuse that may have been caused or permitted by a person who has or had charge of the child, the suspected abuse will be reported to The Children's Aid Society and appropriate steps will be taken.

- Children's Aid Society 416 924-4646
- Catholic Children's Aid Society 416 395-1500
- Jewish Children's Aid Society 416 638-7800
- Native Child and Family Services 416 969-8510

20. Other Important Telephone Numbers

- Emergency 911
- Taxi 416-363-4141
- Tele – Health 1-866-797-0000
- Program Advisor 416-303-1978
- City Consultant 416-397-7388

21. Management of emergency situations

To ensure the safety and well being of the children enrolled in the Centre we have established policy and procedures that provide clear directions for staff and licensee when dealing with emergency situations. They may include:

- Lockdown
- Threat within or outside the vicinity of the Centre
- Natural/Environmental Disaster
- Disaster on premises requiring evacuation

Our Staff will ensure that children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

As soon as possible, the operator/supervisor will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation by:

- Posting a note at the entrance of the building
- Provide information and give updates as a message on the Centre’s voice mail
- Classroom staff may contact families using the HiMama program or call individual parents (if possible), providing them with the current situation
- Information may be posted on the Centre’s website (if possible).

Our centre’s shelter/evacuation site is:

**Miziwe Biik
Aboriginal Employment and Training
167-169 Gerrard Street East
Toronto-Ontario M5A 2E4**

22. Smoking and Vaping policy

Smoking and vaping is prohibited at the Center. According to the *Smoke Free Ontario Act 2017*, no staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians or visitors are allowed to smoke/vape inside the centre, in the playground, nor 20 meters from the Centre’s premises whether children are present or not. For more information please refer to our Non-Smoking and Vaping Policy.

23. Parent/Guardian’s Responsibilities

All parents are required to provide a complete change of clothing in their child’s cubby. Please remember that the extra change of clothing must be appropriate for the weather conditions at any

given time. Please remember to label all your child's belongings. The staff will not be responsible for toys coming from home or for any jewelry lost by your child. It is best to keep jewelry safe at home.

Please ensure that you provide us with up-to-date information – home address and phone numbers, cell phone and work numbers as well as up-to-date contact information (phone numbers) of emergency and/or pick-up persons.

In case of the emergency that may happen to the parents, it is very important to provide the centre with emergency person that may pick up and care for the child when parents are unable to (it may be a person residing out of province or country).

Please provide a current immunization record and any updates that may occur in the future.

Please also inform your child's teacher of any health or other issues at drop-off time including any marks on the child's body or any changes to behavior, changes to emotions or other occurrences.

[24. Service Offerings and Staff Ratios](#)

We are licensed to provide service to families with children from 4 months to 6 years of age.

Our Centre has 6 classrooms:

- 10 infants with 3 staff
- 6 infants with 2 staff
- 5 toddlers with 1 staff
- 8 toddlers with 2 staff
- 10 toddlers with 2 staff
- 16 preschoolers with 2 staff

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) the infant room ratio is 3 children to 1 staff and it is not to be reduced at anytime. The toddler room ratio (children 18 months to 30 months) is 5 children to 1 staff. The preschooler room ratio (children 2.5 to 5 years) ratio is 8 children to 1 staff. Toddler and Preschool Ratios can be reduced during arrival time (between 7:30am to 9:00 am – 90 -minutes period), sleep time (12:30pm to 2:30pm) and departure time (5:00 to 6:00 – 60-minutes period). Reduce ratios are not permitted during playground activities, outings or trips.

[25. Supervision](#)

All staff must ensure that every child in attendance is supervised by paid staff at all times. No child is to be left alone at any time or supervised by a person less than 18 years of age. Students and volunteers are not permitted to be left alone with a child at anytime and are never in staffing ratios.

[26. Student and Volunteer Policy](#)

Policy intent

To ensure the support, safety and well-being of all children, families, staff, volunteers and placement students in our Centre. We are committed to providing an educational experience and knowledge to all volunteers and placement students in our program through proper mentoring supervision, direction and ethical standards.

Policy Statement

All staff should ensure that every child who is in attendance is supervised by a paid Centre staff at all times. No child is to be left alone at any time or supervised by a person less than 18 years of age.

Students and volunteers are not permitted to be left alone with a child at any time and are never included staffing ratios.

Volunteer and student placements and orientation

Volunteers and placement students will have an initial interview with the supervisor. The Volunteer and Student Policy will be reviewed and discussed. An outline of goals and expectations along with the Program Statement, Program Statement Implementation Policy (PSI), Centre's Policies and Procedures and Individualized Plans (IP) for children with medical and non-medical needs including plans for children with Anaphylaxis will be reviewed and signed off at the beginning of placement, annually and when any changes are made.

The student/volunteer will be made aware that they are required to inform the Centre supervisor should there be any potential change in their Vulnerable Sector Check results. It will then be up to the Centre's management to decide if this change in status conflicts with the student/volunteer's authorization to work with children.

An Early Childhood Educator will be assigned to the student/volunteer in order to provide orientation of the classroom, monitoring and mentoring of the student/volunteer.

Volunteer/student is informed about their mentor and her/his responsibilities for the implementation of the policy and supervision of volunteer/students.

All volunteer and placement students are required to:

1. Provide a proper medical completed by a physician documenting a current (<6 months) TB test or chest x-ray with a negative result, proof of MMR and TDP (updated TD every 10 years).
2. A current VSC (<6 months) must be provided from students /volunteers and any placement by a non-high school student. The student/volunteer will be made aware that they are required to inform the Centre's supervisor should there be any potential change in their Vulnerable Sector Check results. It will then be up to the Centre's management to decide if this change in status conflicts with the student/volunteer's authorization to work with children.
3. Complete all documents required by the Centre

All persons will sign all Centres' policies prior to starting their placement, annually and when changes are made.

A Program Statement Implementation (PSI) checklist will be conducted to ensure proper monitoring of practices. The Individual Plans for children with medical and non-medical needs including plans for children with anaphylaxis are reviewed and signed annually and when changes are made.

Volunteers and students are expected to observe and ask questions in order to learn the function of the class room. The goal for volunteer/students is to learn the role and responsibilities of an Early Childhood Educator including but not limited to administration, interaction, programming, organization, routines (sanitizing, toileting, diapering) and transitions. During this time, observations and written documentation will be completed by the host teacher to determine proper supervision and progression for the student/volunteer.

Staff is legally responsible for children at all times. However, we rely on the co-operation of students/volunteers to help staff supervise the children and inform the staff of any unsafe situations.

Field placement students are expected to be prepared daily with their teaching assignment/activities and other items that are required by the university or college they attend. Pre-planned activities and assignments must be discussed with the host teacher in advance and documentation must be completed in a timely manner.

Role and responsibilities of the licensee/supervisor

The supervisor must ensure that:

- 1) Proper medical and immunization are on file
(TB or chest x-ray with negative results, proof of MMR and TDP (updated TD every 10 years))
- 2) All policies, procedures and individualized plans are read, reviewed and signed by the volunteer/student before they begin their placement, annually and when changes are made.
- 3) VSC vulnerable sector check is required for anyone over the age of 19 years old (<6 months.) An offense declaration is required with proof that an application for a VSC has been submitted.
- 4) Required personal information is on file
- 5) Ensure that a copy of the Parent Handbook and the Program Statement is available.
- 6) Ensure the volunteer/student does not take photos that identify children, and ensure the volunteer/student is in compliance with the Centre's Confidentiality Agreement.

Role and responsibilities of the supervising teacher (host teacher):

The mentoring teacher will provide the orientation of the environment and must:

- 1) Be a registered Early Childhood Educator.
- 2) Ensure the volunteer or student follows all Center's policies, procedures and individualized plans.
- 3) Ensures proper communication and interaction with children and parents
- 4) Documents all hours of placement or volunteering
- 5) Has a clear understanding and expectations of field placement requirements, papers and evaluations.
- 6) Conducts annual or as needed Program Statement Implementation checklist to ensure proper monitoring of practices.

GERRARD EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

163 Gerrard Street East Toronto, On. M5A 2E4 Tel: 416 926-2208 Fax: 416 926-9086

Parent Handbook Sign-off Chart

I _____ have read, understand and agree to abide by the above
Parent/guardian's name

policies and guidelines set by Gerrard Early Learning Centre. Failure to comply may lead to the termination of enrollment and withdrawal from the Centre.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____ Witness: _____

Review

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____ Witness: _____

Late pick up - Late Fee

I agree to pick up my child before 6:00 pm. I understand that if I am late I am responsible to pay \$5.00 for a first minute and \$1 for every minute after that. The payment goes directly to the staff that stayed behind with my child and it is not tax deductible. I am also responsible for signing a late form. I understand that if I have three or more late pick up forms in my child's file, my child could be withdrawn from the program. If I am unable to pick up my child by 7:00pm the Children's Aid Society will be contacted.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Date: _____ Witness: _____