



H.S. McLellan Preschool

Family Handbook

**The H.S. McLellan Preschool is licensed by the
Ministry of Education under THRIVE Child Development Centre
to provide an educational early years program in an inclusive setting.**



We are pleased to welcome you and your child to our program! H.S. McLellan Preschool is licensed annually under the Ministry of Education and our curriculum is guided by the '*Child Care and Early Years Act*'. A summary of our licensing visit can be found in the hallway on the wall beside the first set of lockers.

H.S. McLellan is an environment for children and families to learn, grow, explore, and create. We believe in collaboration and with you as part of our program, we want you to feel like part of our team. Our goal is to nurture each individual child in a safe, warm, caring, and education focused environment. Your suggestions, support, and ideas are valued and always welcome.

This handbook will provide information that relates to our Preschool program. If you should require any further information about our program, please feel free to speak to the supervisor or any one of the program staff.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM STATEMENT.....	5-9
CURRICULUM.....	10
INCLUSION.....	11
STAFF.....	11
STUDENTS.....	11-12
ENROLMENT.....	12
WAITLIST.....	12-13
ADMISSIONS.....	13
FEES.....	13
SUBSIDY.....	13
PAYMENT.....	13-14
WITHDRAWAL.....	15
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.....	15
HEALTH AND SAFETY.....	16
ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS.....	16-17
INCIDENT REPORTS.....	17
POSTING OF SERIOUS OCCURRENCES.....	17
CLOSURES.....	18
EMERGENCY CLOSURE.....	18-19
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT.....	19

LOCKERS.....19

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS.....20

PLAYGROUND.....20-21

SUNSCREEN.....21

FIELD TRIPS.....21

TEACHABLE MOMENTS.....22

DISCHARGE.....22

NUTRITION.....23

ALLERGIES.....23

BIRTHDAYS.....23

SMOKING AND VAPING.....24

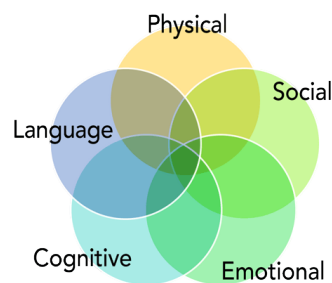
COMPLAINT RESOLUTION POLICY.....24-25

CONTACT US.....25

Program Statement

H.S. McLellan Preschool is a high quality, inclusive child care program with a philosophy that recognizes children's various abilities, interests, learning styles, and cultural backgrounds. Our primary goal is to promote an overall sense of well-being, belonging, and security through supporting positive and responsive interactions among children, families, child care providers, and staff. We view children as competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential, where each child is unique and brings their own personality, approach to learning, and experiences to the program. Development of these is supported through diverse opportunities and exploration of new ideas in an inclusive environment that fosters curiosity and creativity.

Research on early brain development has proven the value of early childhood education. It is within the first few years of a child's life that the brain is most adaptable and has the largest capacity to learn and maintain vast concepts. Exposure to enriched and stimulating experiences sets the foundation for future development and supports lifelong learning. The five domains in which a child develops includes physical, emotional, social, cognitive, and language, where they are all interconnected and the development of one leads to the development of another. To ensure holistic development of every child in our program, we view all five domains as equally important and provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences.



We believe that children are best able to learn through play when surrounded by responsive adults, inclusive environments, and opportunities to regulate their emotions and behaviour. Play is a vital aspect of a child's life as it is how they explore and develop an understanding of the world around them, allowing them to be curious, create, develop relationships, build autonomy, solve problems, and test theories. It also allows children to investigate materials that support and build upon their understanding of literacy and numeracy concepts. Our program believes that a child's play focuses on the process of learning rather than the overall product, where children participate in meaningful and developmentally appropriate experiences that allow them to learn at their own pace. Play materials and equipment are carefully selected to

inspire the children to make choices, interact with others, and foster their active exploration, play, and inquiry, including healthy risk taking in a safe and supervised environment. Within our daily routine, we incorporate a balance of indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest, and quiet time, giving consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.

At H.S. McLellan Preschool, we follow an emergent curriculum through play-based learning that focuses on the children's diverse interests, strengths, and needs, encouraging children to make decisions to construct their own learning. Following the children's lead and fulfilling our role as co-learners, we support children in exploring their curiosities, testing theories, and building relationships. Through collaboration and intentional observation, educators include the interests and needs of all children, families, and educators into the curriculum, ensuring that interactions are positive and constructive. As these interests and needs change, educators adapt the environment and learning experiences to ensure that it is relevant and meaningful to build upon the children's current knowledge and skills.

Our licensed child care program uses the professional learning resource *'How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years'* to guide pedagogy, curriculum development, and build responsive relationships among children, families, and other educators. It shapes our view of the child as competent and capable, families as collaborative partners, educators as co-learners, and the learning environment as the third teacher. Providing goals for children, program expectations, and critical reflection questions, *HDLH?* supports our reflective practices, collaborative inquiry, and how we make children's learning visible through pedagogical documentation. The four foundations of learning and development found in the document include Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. These are seamlessly implemented throughout our interactions, learning experiences, environments, and routines to ensure meaningful participation of all children. Following an anti-bias approach, we believe that every child, regardless of age, ability, religion, language, or culture, is entitled to experience these foundations within all aspects of our program to ensure optimal learning and healthy development. H.S. McLellan Preschool also encompasses the research and legislation of Ontario's two other major early learning documents: *'The Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)'* and *'Think, Feel, Act Lessons from Research about Young Children'*.



Pedagogical documentation is a reflective practice for educators to observe children through a deeper lens and discover how they think and learn. Our educators make daily observations of children in the program and use this information to inform their future curriculum planning to scaffold learning. This provides us with a way to value children's experiences and make their learning and understanding of the world visible to themselves and others. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on developmental growth over time. Pedagogical documentations are posted within the Preschool for families to observe daily and have ongoing conversations with other families and educators about their child's development. Copies of these are also posted in our classrooms for children to reflect on their learning, recreate and expand previous experiences, and further develop their sense of identity and self-esteem. A portfolio is created for each child that includes copies of documentations and other important artifacts that reflect the child's growth. Families can look through these as they are updated and take them home when leaving the program.

We view the diversity of our children and families as an asset to our program, where we incorporate these differences into our curriculum to further enrich the environment and promote a sense of belonging. At H.S. McLellan Preschool, we respect diversity, equity, and inclusion in the abilities and social and cultural backgrounds of our children and families. We provide an inclusive environment that embraces the uniqueness of each family, including their education, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, religion, and beliefs. We plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported, and which is inclusive of all children, including children with Individualized Support Plans. When all children are and feel included, they learn the importance of accepting others and that each individual is unique. We aim to provide a child care environment free from bias and prejudice in which children learn the principles of fairness and respect for the uniqueness of each other.



We use a warm and nurturing approach to encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive and constructive way, supporting their ability to self-regulate. A solution focused approach is used to support children in resolving conflicts. Educators first stop any harmful behaviour that is occurring, then acknowledge the feelings of the children involved, gather information

about what happened, and assist them in coming up with their own solution to the problem. Viewing children as competent individuals, we ensure that they are active participants in resolving their own conflicts to support their development of problem-solving skills in a safe and controlled environment. Educators further support development of these skills by modeling conflict-resolution steps of articulating emotions and ideas, listening to and respecting those of others, and assisting in reaching a mutual agreement. Conflict resolution is also demonstrated by the educators when collaborating with families and other staff members.

Using a self-regulation approach to foster children's developing ability to express emotions and consider the perspectives of others, we are working towards developing a Haven where children and families feel a sense of safety and belonging. To achieve this, we build trusting relationships among children, families, staff, and the community. As educators, we believe that we are better able to help others regulate when we are feeling regulated ourselves. Our sense of calm allows us to handle the emotions of others and understand what our stressors are; recognizing the effects that it can have on our energy, emotions, and behaviour, as well as those of others. Through continual observation and reflective thinking, our educators support children in managing their stress and finding their personal calm by co-regulating through difficult moments as children learn to regulate themselves from being regulated by others. When children are regulated, they are best able to modulate their emotions, focus attention, ignore distractions, recognize impulses, and learn. We are continually learning how to create learning environments and incorporate programming that helps support the development of children's self-regulation by accessing information from community partners and conducting our own research.



H.S. McLellan Preschool recognizes the central and critical role of families in children's development and collaborates with them, as well as community partners, to help our program best meet the needs of those we serve. We aim to foster outreach, engagement, and ongoing communication with families about our program and their children's learning experiences, valuing families as experts on their children. We strive to develop non-judgmental, respectful, and trusting relationships with every family, allowing us to gain valuable insights to help create environments rich in learning opportunities for every child. Reflective teaching practices are used to support children as they develop and grow throughout their preschool years, where the knowledge and skills earned are used as they move on to elementary school and the community. We involve

local community agencies and partners within our curriculum, allowing these partners to support the children, their families, and staff in both our program and their everyday life. We view the community as a valuable resource and educators plan learning opportunities to engage these partners in our program, seeking opportunities to share our knowledge and learn from others in the community.

We recognize the importance of our menus to be both nutritious and appealing to promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of all children. The Preschool Culinarian follows the guidelines of the *Canada's Food Guide* to ensure that all meals and snacks served are both healthy and well-balanced. We invite families of all cultures to share recipes that their children enjoy outside of the Centre and will incorporate these into our menu whenever possible. Our Preschool Culinarian will accommodate all dietary and cultural food requirements or families are able to bring in substitutions that follow current allergy guidelines. Individual Support Plans are created to reflect any modifications or substitutions that need to be made at mealtimes, where records of allergies and dietary needs are posted for program staff to frequently refer to.

We continually undergo professional development to stay current on best practice to better assist you and your child in reaching their full potential while in our care. THRIVE Child Development Centre supports and encourages continuous professional learning among the H.S. McLellan Preschool staff, as well as the identification, collection, and analysis of appropriate outcome measures annually. Although formal professional learning is vital to the success of our program, we often believe that the most central professional growth happens day-to-day as our staff co-learns with the children, families, and each other as self-reflective professionals. Educators assess and reflect on the quality of their program, environment, and interactions daily to ensure that it meets the individual interests and needs of the children and their families.

Our Professional Services Manager-ECE continually documents and reviews the impact of the strategies set out in our program statement on the children and their families to ensure they meet the requirements for quality assurance. Professional leadership is demonstrated by ongoing observation of the program, staff performance reviews, and the children's ongoing development. Conversations with educators and families regarding the success of the program occur on a continual basis to keep open and honest lines of communication.



Family Handbook

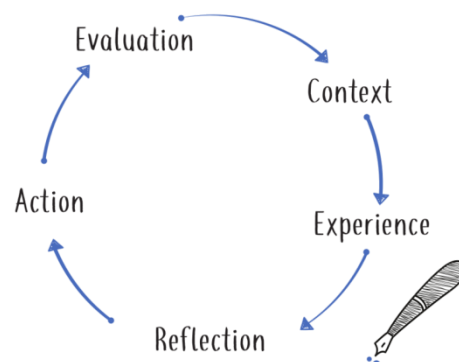
Curriculum:

Our program follows an emergent curriculum to reflect our philosophy of early childhood development and method of planning pedagogy, focusing on building attuned relationships with children to be responsive to their individual needs. Through observation, documentation, and collaboration, educators actively seek out children's interests, strengths, needs, and lived realities, incorporating them into our flexible environment to create meaningful and play-based learning experiences.

Curriculum is responsive and often spontaneous to the interests and needs of the group of children, requiring the educators to be flexible and creative. Emergent curriculum is never built on the children's interests alone as educators and families also have interests and needs that are valuable to our curriculum, where we adapt to the changing needs of those we work with. We believe that all children pursue knowledge in their own unique way and should be encouraged to make decisions to construct their learning. Following the children's lead and fulfilling our role as co-learners, we support children in learning through play to explore their curiosities, test theories, and develop an understanding of the world around them.

We continuously refer to professional learning resources written by the Ontario Ministry of Education to support our emergent curriculum, ensuring best practice and quality assurance within our program. These include '*How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH?)*' and '*Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)*'.

We use pedagogical documentation as a tool to make children's learning visible to themselves and their families, as well as personal reflection for educators to consider the children's development and how to further scaffold learning. Documentation is created daily of a child's individual learning experience or of a group activity and can be found on the TV within the Preschool's hallway. These are printed and organized in individual child portfolios that families can refer to at any time their child is enrolled and will be taken home when departing from the Centre as a reflection of their time spent with us.



Inclusion:

The Preschool collaboratively works with a Resource Consultant from the Early Learning Resources program to provide support to children, family, and educators at the Centre. Individual Support Plan (ISP's) are created to support the children's learning and development, which are incorporated into the total curriculum.

Program evaluation is carried out on an ongoing basis, where ISP's are reviewed and revised at a Family Service Plan meeting every six months to one year. The evaluation is carried out by the family, educators, and therapy team. Therapists and educators work collaboratively to incorporate the child's goals into the program seamlessly.

We value individual differences in backgrounds, cultures, and abilities, demonstrating this within various aspects of our learning environment and through our interactions with children and their families. Families are actively encouraged to share their experiences and values with staff and other families at the Centre, promoting a sense of belonging and strengthening relationships.

Ensuring that appropriate inclusion supports are accessed, they are referred to families in order to support children's well-being and full inclusion in our program. We believe that this helps children reach their personal extraordinary every day.

**Staff:**

We hire Registered Early Childhood Educators and support continuous professional development in working with children of all abilities. Our staff are all current with First Aid and CPR training, Self-Regulation education from The MEHRIT Centre, and approved Criminal Records Check with the Vulnerable Sector (CPIC).

Students:

We provide educational opportunities through student placements, such as high school cooperative education and post-secondary institutions. This supports individuals in entering the field of early childhood education as they gain hands

on experiences in a controlled environment that expands their knowledge and allows them to test theories learned in class. Our policy states that both volunteers and students will never be left unsupervised with the children at any time and are always being supervised by the Preschool staff.

Enrolment:

Following anti-bias approach, enrolment is open to all children in the community, including employees of THRIVE Child Development Centre. Children can attend 2 to 5 days per week, twelve months per year.

The Preschool is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Hours of child care for each child is determined by parental/guardian's work/school schedule. Children attending for school readiness/socialization are enrolled from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Age groups:

- 24 space preschool program for children 2 ½ to 4 years old
- 10 space toddler program for children 18 months to 2 ½ years old



Waitlist:

H.S. McLellan Preschool is committed to managing a waitlist to enroll children into the Centre in a transparent, fair, and consistent manner.

- Applications can be made through the child care application site at: www.saultchildcare.ca.)
- No fee is charged to have a child added to the register.
- Children will only be placed in H.S. McLellan Preschool from that register.
- Priority will be granted for:
 - Children of THRIVE employees
 - Siblings of current children enrolled
 - Children that are clients of THRIVE (provided appropriate ratios are maintained)
 - Returning families

When attempting to contact a family to offer a child care space, 3 attempts will be made and on the final attempt 24 hours will be given to the family to respond to the message that has been left. Email addresses will be used when available and the listed phone number is not in service. After this time frame has passed, the child will be removed from the waitlist and the next family will be contacted.

Admissions:

The following process is followed:

- 1) The child is offered a space from the centralized waitlist.
- 2) A date is determined for the family to visit the Preschool before deciding if they would like the space for their child.
- 3) During this visit, the family is given a tour of the Preschool and discusses the policies, procedures, and program statement. The child is able to visit the classroom they would be enrolled in and meet the educators and other children in the room.
- 4) If satisfied with the program, admission forms are completed and a start date is chosen.

Children will be enrolled on a yearly basis, September to August, but children may enter the program part way through the year if space becomes available.

Fees:

- **Registration Fee:** \$7.09 non-refundable (*due upon acceptance of the child into the program*)
- **Full Day Toddler Room:** \$19.85 per day
- **Full Day Preschool Room:** \$18.90 per day

Subsidy:

Subsidy applications are provided by the Professional Services Manager-ECE if you wish to apply for a subsidized space through Social Services Child Care Services.

Payment:

You will be billed at the end of each month. Your invoice will be emailed after the first week of the following month. The full invoice amount is **due immediately upon receiving your invoice** or the next time your child comes into Preschool. For example, September's invoice will be emailed to you during the first week of

October. These are non-refundable except in the case of withdrawal from the program. If fees are in arrears, the child may be discharged from the program unless arrangements are made with the Business Manager at 705-759-1131 Ext. 217 or the Professional Services Manager-ECE at 705-759-1131 Ext. 209.

Billings will include all days your child is enrolled and Thrive/H.S.McLellan is open, regardless of the child's attendance. Parents/guardians will not be billed for statutory holidays or any days when the preschool is closed.

Please make your payments at reception, the program staff cannot be held responsible to deliver fees to the office.

Please note: We have moved to a **no cash system** for payments.

We offer the following payment options:

- 1) **Cheque:** No charge
 - Please make cheque out to:
THRIVE Child Development Centre, 74 Johnson Avenue, P6C 2V5
- 2) **Debit Card:** No charge
 - **In person** at reception or **payment over the phone** with an Interac Visa card
- 3) **Electronic Transfer:** No charge (your financial institution may charge a fee)
 - Please send the Interac E-transfer to: **accounting@kidsthive.ca**
 - Please provide your password in a separate email to **accounting@kidsthive.ca**.
- 4) **Credit Card:** Visa and Mastercard only
 - **In person** at reception or **payment over the phone** by calling reception and giving them your visa information.

If there is a problem with paying the fees on time (financial or otherwise), please contact the Preschool Manager.



Withdrawal:

Written notice of permanent withdrawal must be given two weeks in advance. If notice is not received, fees will continue. Children leaving for school in the fall will be discharged by the last day before the Labour Day weekend.

Arrival and Departure:

Please make sure that the educator in attendance is aware of your child's arrival and departure. We cannot accept responsibility for children who are not inside the classroom or playground. If possible, spend a few minutes sharing information with the educators as this helps to make the transition easier and enhances the relationships between families and staff.

Your child can only be released to the person(s) you have listed on your Emergency Information Form. Due to our staff schedules and the number of children enrolled in the program, it is difficult for every staff member to meet and know the face of every authorized person listed in your child's file. To ensure the safety and security of each child, staff will request photo identification to be provided if they are unsure who the person is before releasing the child into a person's care upon pick up.

Arrangements with families will be made for fixed arrival and departure times for their child as this is necessary to ensure the staff to child ratio required by law. It is also important for us to provide a sense of security for the child in following a regular routine. Do not drop your child off before his/her designated arrival time and do not pick him/her up after the designated departure time. If you need to make arrangements to have your child picked up or dropped off at a different time for whatever reason, please check with the Preschool staff and we will be happy to accommodate you if we can.

Parents or guardians that arrive later than their scheduled pick up time may be charged an additional fee (\$5.00 for each 10 minutes). If the Preschool staff have not been notified of a late pick up ahead of time, they will attempt to contact the parent/guardian or emergency contact provided. In the event that we are unable to contact the family after one hour from the child's scheduled departure time or after closure, the child will be considered abandoned by the family and the Children's Aid Society will be called without further notification to the family.

Health and Safety:

Algoma Public Health requires that an up-to-date immunization record is completed prior to enrolment. Your child **cannot** attend Preschool until we have a copy of his/her immunization record.

There are up to 34 children attending at any one time. Policy states that children with communicable diseases must be kept at home, although there is still an increased risk of catching colds, flu, and childhood illnesses within the group setting. If your child has vomiting or diarrhoea, they must be kept home for 24 hours after the last occurrence according to Algoma Public Health's recommendations. The staff appreciates a phone call whenever your child will not be attending.

Our voicemail operates twenty-four hours a day and a message may be left at any time at (705) 759-1131, ext. 219.

Each child's medical condition must be stable in order to attend the program. Children with exceptional health care needs must have a medical form completed by the child's most responsible physician, as well as instructions for individual care and required support in place prior to their enrolment. Admission of children with exceptional health care needs will be based on the adequacy of the facilities for care, group dynamics of the children, and availability of required support.



Administration of Medication:

- 1) A designated Preschool Staff will administer medication when required during program hours.
- 2) A physician must prescribe all medication but exceptions may be made for emergency medication.
- 3) Medication will be administered to a child only from the original container. The container must be clearly labelled with the child's name, name of medication, dosage, date of purchase, expiry date, and instructions for storage and administration.
- 4) Families must complete and sign a Medication Authorization Form indicating the times the medication is to be given, as well as the dosage.

If you plan to leave your child in the care of another adult (e.g., while out of town), please provide written notification identifying the substitute guardian in your absence regarding medication administration.

Incident Reports:

If your child receives a minor injury while at the Preschool, such as scrapes, bumps, bruises, etc., you will be notified in a written incident report. A note will be left on your child's locker at the end of the day indicating that the Preschool staff have a report for you to sign. Once you sign the report, a copy will be provided to you. If the Preschool staff are concerned about the injury or if it is of a more serious nature, they will contact you to let you know what has happened prior to pick up. In the case that the legal guardian is not picking the child up at the end of the day, a copy of the incident report will be sent home and the original form can be signed as soon as possible.

Posting of Serious Occurrences:

The safety and well-being of our children in licensed child care programs is the highest priority. In spite of all best precautions, serious occurrences can sometimes take place.

A serious occurrence could include:

- Life-threatening injury or illness
- Missing or unsupervised child(ren)
- Unplanned disruption of normal operations

Many factors may lead to a serious occurrence report. A serious occurrence does not necessarily mean that we are out of compliance with licensing requirements or that children are at risk while at the child care program. Serious occurrence reporting has always been a licensing requirement for the Preschool but the posting of serious occurrences in this manner will support increased transparency and access to information for families.

A Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted at the inside entrance to the Preschool (double glass doors) for 10 business days following any serious occurrence. This posting will give you information about the incident and outline follow-up actions taken and the outcomes, all while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved. Where applicable, long-term actions taken by H.S. McLellan Preschool will also be included within the posting to help prevent similar incidents from ever occurring again in the future.

Closures:

The Preschool operates 12 months per year and will be closed for the following statutory holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday in August
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas and Boxing Day



The Preschool will be closed over the Christmas and New Year period, as well as for 2 or 3 staff professional development days per year. Advanced notice is given for these dates. No fees are charged when we are closed.

Emergency Closure:

The following is our policy around closure for emergencies (e.g., winter storms). We will close only if municipal operations close, such as public transit and municipal offices. In the event of a closure for any reason, announcements will be made on the local radio station and a message will be left on our answering machine in the building. Announcements may also be made on THRIVE's website, THRIVE's Facebook page, Soo Today, and the Centre/Preschool voicemail. There will be no fee charged for days closed. Considering the multitude of families at our Centre, you will not be contacted personally, so please view the listed areas for announcements of closures.

If the children are to be dismissed early for any reason, the Preschool will contact all families to request that the children be taken home as soon as

possible. If a family member listed on the child's Emergency Information Form cannot be contacted, we will keep the child at the Centre until we have reached someone. To ensure the safety and well-being of the children, we have Emergency Management policies and procedures in place until you are able to pick up your child.

If we need to vacate the building due to a fire, our emergency shelter is the portable in the parking lot. If the fire department informs us that we will not be able to return to the building, they will transport us by bus to the Lifespring Church on 891 People's Road. We will contact each family individually in this situation and ask that you pick your child up as soon as possible. If a parent or guardian is unable to be reached, the listed emergency contact will be called and you will be notified of this. Staff will remain with the children until they are picked up.

Family Involvement:

We value all family input and recognize the importance of connection and communication between the Preschool staff and children's families. We highly encourage this to discuss the child's progress in the program and exchange ideas on child development, as well as opportunities to share successes and any possible concerns in a trusting relationship. Families are welcome to call or visit the Preschool at any time.

Lockers:

Your child will be given a locker to store their belongings while attending the program. Notes and artwork will be placed in the can on top of their locker for you to take home. Part time children who share lockers must empty their lockers completely each day so that there is ample space for the other child to use the following day.



Clothing and Possessions:

Children should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate for physical activity, as well as the weather and season. A second set of clothing should be left in the child's locker in case of accidents or other messes. Due to health regulations, we are not allowed to rinse any soiled garments before sending them home.

Clothing that has become wet or soiled will be placed in a plastic bag and left in the child's locker. We will ensure that the bag is in a visible location and to inform you of it at pick up.

If needed, we ask that your child only bring one comfort item from home as children are encouraged to leave toys and other personal belongings in their lockers. This is to prevent items from becoming lost or ruined. All clothing and belongings should be labelled with the child's name to lessen the risk of lost items. Families are asked to send a supply of diapers and wipes if required.

Playground:

Daily outdoor play and exploration in nature is an important part of our program. We spend a minimum of 2 hours outside daily, weather permitting, so please provide suitable outdoor play clothes for your child. This includes hats, mittens, neck warmers, rain or winter boots, and snowsuits. Our policies state that we cannot wash or dry outdoor items to prevent them from being ruined. If possible, please leave extra items in your child's locker to use when their other items are wet and bring them home to be washed when dirty. We ask that you please label your child's outdoor clothing items in the event of another child(ren) having the same item or to assist in locating a missing item.

We value the importance of messy play and the unique learning experience that it provides. Each child in the program will be provided a Muddy Buddy while at the Centre to play in wet and muddy weather. If you pick your child up from the playground and they are still wearing their Muddy Buddy, please ensure that they are returned to their locker at the end of the day. We hold the responsibility of washing these when needed. If you do not wish to have your child wear a Muddy Buddy, please ensure that your child has outdoor, water resistant clothing alternatives.



We encourage children to learn through risk taking in a safe and controlled environment, where supervision of the children is always maintained and our highest priority. Our playground is designed to support children's creative and active play, where we scaffold learning with additional outdoor resources and experiences to further their interests and development. We also utilize the large grass area behind our parking lot for children to explore additional nature aspects that our playground cannot provide, such as different trees and insects. Play in this area is always well supervised, often including small groups of children and additional staff to ensure the safety of all children.

Please observe the following safety tips:

- Running shoes are recommended for outdoor play.
- Please avoid or remove drawstrings, cords, necklaces, and scarfs from any clothing a child wears as these are all choking hazards.
- It is good practice for children to wear a hat every day during outdoor play to protect them from the elements of weather. Please be sure your child has the appropriate hat for the season and day.

Sunscreen:

All families must apply sunscreen to their child(ren) before they come to Preschool as we do not have sufficient time in the morning to apply sunscreen on all children. If you would like sunscreen reapplied after sleep time, you will need to provide the Preschool with a bottle of sunscreen to be used on your child. We ask that you sign a Sunscreen Permission Form stating the name of your child's sunscreen and we will label each child's sunscreen with their name to ensure that theirs is used. Proper hand hygiene will be practiced between applying sunscreen on children to avoid cross contamination. If you wish to provide your child with sunglasses, please make sure they are labelled with your child's name.



Field Trips:

On occasion, the children may be taken out on nature outings around the Preschool property and neighborhood. Families will be notified in advance and permission notes will be sent home for any major outings. Families are always invited and encouraged to attend any of our major outings.

Teachable Moments:

Our Behaviour Management Policy is posted on our family information board. All children will be taught in a nurturing and supportive environment that encourages positive and inclusive behaviour. Children will be guided in a respectful manner and in a way that is appropriate to their age, ability, and developmental level. The goal within our program is to promote self-regulation and respect for others. To ensure the health and safety of all children and staff, it may be necessary for an adult to intervene with unpredicted or unsafe behaviours. This will be carried out in a calm and gentle manner.

The following are not permitted in the program:

- Corporal punishment of the child;
- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding; or
- Inflicting bodily harm on children including making them eat or drink against their will.

Discharge:

If it becomes necessary to consider the discharge of a child (e.g., fees not paid, safety risk related to the child's health or behaviour), families will be contacted. If a child is absent excessively (more than 50% of the time) over a two-month period, we may discharge the child or reduce the days of enrolment to enable other children from the waitlist to attend. The Professional Services Manager-ECE will make every effort to direct families to any available source of assistance, financial or otherwise.

Nutrition:

The Preschool Culinarian follows the guidelines of the *Canada's Food Guide* to ensure that your child is served a nutritious and well-balanced morning snack, lunch, and mid-afternoon snack daily. Due to these guidelines and possible allergies, families are discouraged from bringing foods from home into the Centre to protect the health of children and staff. You may be permitted to provide food from home if your child has dietary restrictions and cannot eat the item(s) on our menu. An Individual Support Plan will be written to reflect any modifications or substitutions that need to be made at mealtimes. Records are kept and posted of children's allergies and dietary needs that program staff often refer to. Our Culinarian also refers to these records when preparing food or changing the menu.



Allergies:

Due to allergies, THRIVE Child Development Centre is a **NUT FREE BUILDING**.

Please DO NOT send any peanuts, peanut butter, or nuts of any kind with your child to the Centre to support the health and well-being of those within it.



Birthdays:

Each child's birthday will be celebrated by singing 'Happy Birthday' at snack time and presenting the child with a Birthday Certificate to take home. We will respect spiritual and cultural beliefs as requested.

We ask that you please do not send any special treats from home to the Centre for the children due to food allergies.

Smoking and Vaping:

In compliance with Ontario law, smoking and vaping are both prohibited in the building and on the playground. Smoking or handling such items while in the child care centre and/or on the playground, whether or not the children are present, is prohibited.

Complaint Resolution Policy:

Do you have a comment, question, compliment, or complaint?

At THRIVE Child Development Centre, we believe that the children and families we work with deserve the best possible services and are consistently looking for ways to improve. We make it a priority to ensure that the help we give is professional and offered in a way that respects the rights and individual needs of each child and family we serve. We welcome your comments, questions, and feedback if you are happy with our services.

Despite our best efforts, we acknowledge that there may be times when you are not fully satisfied with our services. When this happens, we strongly encourage you to inform us so that we can avoid it from becoming a more severe problem or occurring again to you or another family.

We have a complaint procedure that you can use to let us know when there is a problem. You can follow the steps below or use our Feedback Form to submit your concern to us in writing. This form is available at reception upon request. Whichever method of communication you choose, we are dedicated in working with you to determine and implement a solution. Please note that sharing your concern with us will not affect the services you receive.

Step 1:

- We ask that you first address your concern directly with the staff member involved. She/he will listen to your concern and discuss the issue with you, where you can collaborate to solve the problem together. If this does not help or you do not feel comfortable addressing your concern with the staff member, you can ask to speak with his/her Manager. Our receptionist can connect you with this individual.

Step 2:

- The Manager will call you within five (5) business days. She/he will speak with you about your point of view. She/he will listen to your concern and discuss the issue with you, where you can collaborate to solve the

problem together. If this effort is not sufficient, you can ask to speak with the Chief Executive Officer.

Step 3:

- The Chief Executive Officer will call you within three (3) business days. She/he will listen to your concern and discuss the issue with you, where you can collaborate to solve the problem together. If this still does not help, the Chief Executive Officer will set up a meeting in another attempt to reach a satisfactory resolution. She/he will listen to your concerns and, with others and yourself, try to settle the outstanding disagreements.

We want to work with you to find solutions. However, if you feel that this process has been unsuccessful or you do not feel secure discussing your concern directly with us, there are other choices you can make. You can contact one of the following:

- 1. Program Supervisor at the Office Ministry of Children and Youth Service:**
(705) 541- 2139
- 2. The Office of Child and Family Services Advocacy:** (416) 325-5581
- 3. For concerns regarding H. S. McLellan Preschool:** 1(877) 510-5333 or email childcareontario@ontario.ca

Contact Us

If you need to get in contact with the Preschool for any reason, you can reach us at **(705) 759-1131, ext. 219**. If we are unable to answer the phone, please leave us a message and we will return your call, if needed, as soon as possible. You can also email us at preschool@kidsthive.ca .

Our voicemail operates **24 hours a day** so you can leave a message at any time if necessary, day or night.

If you need to reach the Professional Services Manager-ECE, you can reach them at **(705) 759-1131, ext. 209**.

**We look forward to learning and growing together
with you and your child!**



THRIVE Child Development Centre gratefully accepts your donations to support our programs and services. Cheques may be made payable to "THRIVE" Foundation" or you may donate online by visiting our website at www.kidsthive.ca and clicking the 'donate now' button.