

FORT ERIE CO-OPERATIVE PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

(Revised September 2023)

Welcome / Philosophy

Welcome to Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool! This Parent Handbook has been created so everyone whose child is enrolled at our centre is aware of the requirements of Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool. This handbook covers our childcare philosophies, business policies, and expectations. Please read this handbook carefully. You are encouraged to contact the Supervisor with any questions or comments.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool is committed to creating a safe, warm, loving environment for children between the ages of 30 months and 6 years. Our centre is a place they can learn and grow physically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually, and socially at their own pace. We want to help your child increase their confidence, and self-esteem by treating them as unique individuals, and allowing them to express themselves in a variety of ways. We strive to make your child's time at preschool the best experience it can be for them as well as you, the parents.

We are committed to supporting families by maintaining open communication and encouraging parental involvement in our programming and care activities.

In programming activities for the children, we follow the Ontario Early Years framework, which follows a play-based learning philosophy. We develop activities centered around stories, songs, math, fine and gross motor skills, gathering time, science, music, theatre, and arts/crafts. We aim to prepare your children for their school years by exposing them regularly to letters, numbers, colours, shapes, name recognition, and new vocabulary. Please see any staff member if you'd like more information on the curriculum framework.

Programs

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool offers:

- full-day preschool and kindergarten programs for children between the ages of 30 months and 6 years. The cost is \$19.85 per day*
- full-day preschool programs for children between the ages of 24 and 30 months. These spots are limited. The cost is \$21.26 per day*

Hours of Operation / School Closures

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool is open Monday to Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The centre follows the public elementary school calendar for school holidays and is closed for all statutory holidays including:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

*Prices reflect fee reductions under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program and are subject to change.

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PART 1: UNDERSTANDING PRESCHOOL

What is a Co-operative Preschool?

A co-operative preschool is a non-profit organization of parents who have banded together for the purpose of setting up and maintaining a preschool for their children. Essentially, it is a preschool for the children provided by the parents. Because of membership effort and participation, the fees are lower than a private preschool and therefore more children will benefit from a preschool experience.

How a Co-op works

At no other time or place in your child's life will there be a group with the same common denominator of children and adults. This can be both exhilarating and supportive; through the child, the parent reaches a community of other parents and children. With the support and guidance of the teacher, parents learn to work and care co-operatively to create the kinds of experiences they want for their children and themselves. We abide by the rules and regulations of the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA 2014) and Ontario Regulation 13/15.

In this environment, the children's needs are of paramount importance. Co-operatives provide the time, the place, and the people to meet the children's need for love, understanding, relationships, responsibility, learning and creativity.

For parents, a co-op provides support and counseling. It's a place where parents feel they belong, where they observe their child, and where they are both learners and teachers in the practice of parenthood. Here, parents are involved in their children's early education. The teacher must be responsive to both child and parent needs. At the same time, the parents must be responsive to the professional and personal requirements of the teacher. Collectively and co-operatively, the teacher and parents must respond to the needs of the children.

The success of your child's experience at Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool depends upon the fullest co-operation and active support of all parents. We need your help and understanding in all the varied aspects of the school program.

Mission Statement

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool's mission is to provide a parent-involved preschool program that's committed to the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of young children.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool offers a child-centered environment specifically for children between the ages of 30 months and 5 years. This environment provides opportunities for children to learn and practice skills (physical, social, verbal and intellectual) and to develop a wholesome self-concept in a positive atmosphere of acceptance and trust.

Each child will be encouraged to develop independence, self-confidence, self-regulation, curiosity, creativity, and responsibility in an acceptable and satisfying way. Outings and classroom visitors will provide concrete learning experiences. Trips are possible with the support and participation of parents. A co-op is a parent-run and operated organization which is licensed by the Ministry of Education and follows the CCEYA 2014.

As a member of this co-operative preschool, parents assist in implementing the program as well as contribute to decision making within the program. This gives parents an opportunity to observe their own child and be a part of their child's preschool education.

Our preschool provides the opportunity for parents to increase their understanding of the ages and stages of child development; through communication with other parents and the teacher, as well as observing the techniques of the teacher while helping in the classroom, parents gain a new insight into their parenting roles.

Co-operatives are fragile organizations, which depend on the co-operation and goodwill of people who begin as strangers and may have different ideas about how things should be done. In order to keep from unintentionally hurting someone's feelings, parents are expected to be overly tactful in all situations, to think of the good of the group, and to try not to be quick to judge. "Grapevine mutterings" are very destructive to the morale of any volunteer group and should be consciously avoided.

Any problem or criticism should be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors as soon as possible. The Board will do its best to keep everything running smoothly, and keep everyone informed of what's happening. However, they are volunteers and oversights and crises do happen, even with the best of planning. The best policy is to assume all slights are unintentional.

Program Goals

We believe that preschool play with adult guidance is the foundation for all later learning. Our main objective is to guide your child towards self-discipline and self-regulation. Our program offers a variety of play-based experiences, which allow your child to:

- Realize they are competent, capable of complex thinking and rich in potential
- Develop a positive self-image
- Develop a positive relationship with adults and peers
- Develop group interaction skills
- Develop physical skills, both large and small muscle control
- Develop cognitive skills, primarily literacy and numeracy
- Promote language development and good communication skills
- Promote independence and initiative
- Develop creativity and imaginative expression through music, crafts and drama
- Foster their sense of exploration, play and inquiry

Program Statement

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool strives to deliver positive and stimulating learning experiences in a safe environment that enhances a child's physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. This enhancement happens throughout a child's daily routine which encompasses a balance of indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, quiet play, musical experiences and snack time.

Play is the cornerstone of our curriculum — understood to be essential to the healthy social and cognitive development of children. Through play experiences and guidance by specially trained staff, the children are exposed to situations that will stimulate:

- communication and social skills through child-child and adult-child interactions;
- fine motor development;
- gross motor development through physical activity and outdoor play;
- self-esteem and decision-making capabilities;
- curiosity;
- initiative; and

- independence

When this approach to learning takes place along with staff's understanding of child development, each child's learning and individual development is supported and as a result, the child's competence, capacity and potential are maximized. We know that children flourish in all areas of development when they are in supportive, caring and responsive relationships with adults whose focus is on the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of all children. This is the foundation of our quality child care.

Children are encouraged, but not forced, to participate in all activities. We strive to provide a program that offers services to children, their families and the community, that encompasses the research and legislation in Ontario's three major early learning documents: *How Does Learning Happen?*, *The Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)* and *Think, Feel, Act Lessons from Research about Young Children*.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool is a centre of inclusion. We believe that every child deserves to be treated with dignity, respect and equality. We honour and respect all children's beliefs, culture, language and experiences acquired from their family and community. It is also the duty of the centre to ensure that any child with exceptionalities is given the opportunity to excel and flourish physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively.

Our strategies to achieve our program statement are guided by the work done on Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years ("How Does Learning Happen"). We understand that learning and development happens within the context of relationships among children, families, educators, and their environments.

We understand that for children to grow and flourish, the four following foundational conditions need to exist: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression. These foundations are a vision for the future potential of all children and a view of what they should experience each and every day. These four foundations apply regardless of age, ability, culture, language, geography, or setting. They are conditions that children naturally seek for themselves.

FOUNDATIONS	GOALS FOR CHILDREN	EXPECTATIONS FOR PROGRAMS
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world	Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them
Well-being	Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being	Early childhood programs nurture a child's healthy development and support their growing sense of self, as well as self-regulation skills

Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses	Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration and play to develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking and innovation
Expression or communication	Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways	Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms including creativity, problem solving, mathematical behaviours and language development

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will adopt the following strategies to create these conditions:

- Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children
- Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff
- Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate
- Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry
- Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences
- Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans
- Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving care
- Foster the engagement of and ongoing communications with parents about the program and their children
- Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, families and staff
- Support staff and others who interact with the children at the preschool in relation to continuous professional learning
- Document and review the impact of the strategies set out above

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool has developed the following goals and practices to support the strategies listed above:

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool provides nutritious snacks and beverages to the children in our care. All food and drink provided must meet or exceed the recommendation set out in the latest version of Health Canada documents, "Canada's Food Guide." A monthly menu will be posted on the parent information board and in the snack room. Children who have allergies, food intolerances, or special diets through parental preferences or observances are provided with nutritional alternatives. All handling of food and preparation areas are safe and sanitary, and the Supervisor has a Food Handler's Certificate.

We strive to make snack time a positive learning experience that promotes social interactions and self-help skills. Staff will encourage children to have a healthy respect for food and eating. The staff or volunteer parents sit with the children and use this time to engage and develop relationships with all of the children. We encourage and never force children to eat snack; children assist with snack routines whenever possible.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure compliance with the Niagara Regional Public Health procedures and practice in order to provide physical, instructional, and early learning and care supports for staff for toileting routines. In support of this, all accessories and washroom fixtures are in good condition and all supplies are available and close at hand. Toileting procedures are posted in the washroom.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure that all staff, students and volunteers have a current Criminal Reference Check that includes a Vulnerable Sector Screening. This must be updated every five years. An Offence Declaration Form must be provided every year that a Criminal Reference Check is not required.

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Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure that all staff working with the children have a valid First Aid Certification including infant and child CPR.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure all materials, play equipment, furnishings and fixed fixtures are in good working order, clean and safe for the children and staff. “A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress” (HDLH, p. 30). We will remove anything that is potentially dangerous to children.

Anything done to maintain cleanliness, including toy and equipment cleaning and disinfecting will follow the current Niagara Regional Public Health cleaning guidelines and schedules as part of providing a clean and sanitary environment. Our daily, weekly and monthly cleaning and disinfecting of toys and play equipment will be signed and dated by staff and volunteer parents when completed. As soon as toys and/or play equipment become soiled, they are properly cleaned.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will support the individual child's lifelong learning of proper hand hygiene. We will have staff and parent volunteer model proper hand-washing procedures for the children and post visual hand-washing posters. Gloves usage provides barriers to potential illnesses and exposure to harmful materials and will be worn by staff when necessary.

It is important to the success of our program to have positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents and our staff. Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure that everyone is treated and spoken to with respect and dignity. We will ensure that by demonstrating positive interactions, empathy and concern for others, staff serve as role models for parents and children. We will ensure that the staff at Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool maintain a positive tone of voice, model positive non-verbal communication skills, and use teachable moments to further develop positive social behaviours.

We encourage engagement and open communication with parents about our program and their children at daily drop-off and pick-up times, as well as with monthly newsletters and calendars, parent/teacher meetings and yearly surveys. As a Co-operative Preschool, parents can share in their child's experience and gain a greater understanding of their children's interests and accomplishments. Parental involvement is an integral part of our program.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will also promote interaction with children in a way that fosters self-esteem and supports the children as they learn to self-regulate their emotions and to recognize empathy. “Studies show that when

educators modeled and helped children express feelings, recognize others' feelings, and help others, children developed positive social skills such as perspective taking, empathy, and emotion regulation and were less likely to engage in problematic behaviours.”(HDLH, pp. 24-25). The staff will role-model how to accomplish tasks and assist children to process their own emotions and learn to identify the emotions of others and provide encouragement on how tasks are completed.

Being aware of how the day is planned allows for consistency, self-regulation, minimizes negative behaviors and promotes general well-being. “A safe environment that offers consistency and continuity as well as graduated support for children's growing independence and capacity for self-care enables children to tackle challenges, learn to persevere, and explore ways to cope with manageable levels of positive stress.” (HDLH, p. 30).

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will prepare and post program plans for all families to see. This plan offers more details about events and activities that are currently happening. Parents can use this tool for involvement by bringing in resources, such as books, pictures, costumes or music, which are relevant to the programming in the room at that time.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will support staff in their competencies to follow the cues of children and provide interactions that encourage children to extend their learning with activities that interest them and choices that support their learning goals. “When children initiate experiences, generate ideas, plan, and problem-solve, make meaningful choices, and act spontaneously through play, they are more likely to be happy and get along well with others, to have lower levels of stress, and to be attentive and motivated to learn” (HDLH p. 35). In support of this, we will provide children with choices, time and materials so that they may follow their own learning goals.

A visual environment created through displays that are inclusive and are changed regularly to reflect the recent interests and artwork created by the children promotes well-being. “Enabling children to develop a sense of belonging as part of a group is also a key contributor to their lifelong well-being. A sense of belonging is supported when each child's unique spirit, individuality, and presence are valued.” (HDLH, p. 24). We will create a visual environment through displays that reflect the children's work as well as displays of people with disabilities and diverse cultures.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will provide children daily experiences with a multitude of materials and accessories to encourage a natural play environment that enhances cognitive development. “The focus is not on teaching a body of knowledge or a predetermined set of topics. Nor is it centered on children's achievement of a specific skill set. In the early years, programs are most effective when the content of learning is focused on supporting the development of strategies, dispositions, and skills for lifelong learning through play and inquiry.” (HDLH, p. 5).

To ensure spontaneous cognitive and manipulative learning experiences occur throughout the day, we will offer a program that supports the development of cognitive and manipulative skills of the children based on their cues and interests. Children will have access to a selection of accessories and materials, such as counting and sorting games, puzzles, cause and effect toys, lacing beads, sewing cards and shape sorters, etc.

The staff at Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will expose children to various materials and accessories to promote natural opportunities for the development of language and literacy. Planning language and literacy experiences every day encourages the children to use and develop their vocabulary, their questioning skills and recall abilities. “Programs can best support emerging literacy skills by providing open-ended materials that foster imagination and symbolic play, including signs, symbols, and props that support print awareness in authentic contexts; by encouraging children to engage in play with words and sounds in song and rhyme; and by offering numerous opportunities for children to share books and stories.” (HDLH, p. 42).

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will incorporate language and literacy materials by labeling shelves and toy bins with words and pictures; have language and literacy learning experiences planned (and documented) daily; encourage staff to use more than one form of communication; and, expose the children to community language and literacy experiences.

Transitions are a challenge and an opportunity for children. Staff will have better awareness of the individual children's cues while children further develop their self-regulation and self-help skills at these times. Positive interactions during transitions provide a supportive learning environment. To facilitate smooth transitions we will provide props and visuals and reduce waiting times for the children. Staff will ensure all arrival and departure times are accurately documented on the Sign In/Sign Out Attendance Record.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will promote daily active physical play learning experiences for children. "Through active play and physical exploration, children gain increasing levels of independence, learn to persevere and practice self-control, and develop a sense of physical, emotional, and intellectual mastery and competence." (HDLH, pp. 29-30). We will provide physical play learning experiences where children are given choices of physical play learning experiences each morning, whether outdoors or indoors in the gym (depending on weather conditions) which are planned and/or documented.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure children are able to engage in outdoor play experiences safely, while being well-shaded and well-supervised. We will also ensure that any unsafe conditions or situations are quickly remedied and that staff have access to a communication device to quickly obtain assistance when needed and a first aid kit will be accessible to staff outside to deal with emergencies promptly.

Physical play contributes to children's well-being through sport play; children learn turn taking, communication, sharing, good sportsmanship as well as gross motor skills. Our naturalized playground encourages children to safely explore nature and use their imagination whether it is by watching insects build homes or planting and nurturing vegetables and flowers in their own garden. We will ensure that all outdoor/gross motor developmentally appropriate 3-D materials, balls and equipment are in good condition and accessible to children. "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them." (HDLH, p. 19). Storage will be provided for all outdoor equipment to ensure that it is stored and maintained in a safe manner.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure collaboration with local community partners. "Opportunities to engage with people, places, and the natural world in the local environment help children, families, educators, and communities build connections, learn and discover, and make contributions to the world around them. It fosters a sense of belonging to the local community, the natural environment, and the larger universe of living things" (HDLH p. 9). Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool is open to all support services and aids in the community to train our staff, contribute to individual program plans or work in the program as additional support in the classroom. Our staff will work cooperatively in a professional partnership with all services in place for the well-being of the child. Service coordination meetings are required to set up goals and discuss what the best interest of the child and their family is. The sharing of information for individual children takes place only after the appropriate forms have been signed by both the parents and staff.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool believes in the importance of continuous staff training and strives to support staff in continuous growth and professional learning. In the interest of continuing to offer the best possible care for our

enrolled children, staff will be provided with the opportunity to attend workshops, seminars/webinars, and conferences to develop their knowledge and stay current in the profession.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool believes capturing and documenting our practice is a form of reinforcement of the learning process for educators, family and children. We will document our learning activities using multimedia (pictures, texts, emails, videos, newsletters, bulletin board postings, etc). This documentation is not only for the teachers to review and then expand on the learning moments, but for the children to visualize their progress. Parents will be encouraged to look at the progress their child and their peers are making.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool ensures that all new staff, students and volunteers review this program statement prior to interacting with the children; and, that all staff, students and volunteers review this program statement at any time that it is modified or at least annually.

Program Statement Implementation Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool's Program Statement will be included (both electronically and in hard copy) in the Parent Handbook and in the school's Policies and Procedures manual. Parents, volunteers, and staff will be presented with and asked to review the Statement upon employment, prior to involvement or interaction with the children, or at such a time the Program Statement is modified

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will review the Program Statement and Implementation Policy at least annually at the start of the school year and record that it has been done. Any need for modifications will be noted.

Monitoring:

The Supervisor/RECE will monitor staff through observation and notes twice per school year. The Supervisor/RECE will monitor regular support staff through observance per year and note it in the daily journal. The Supervisor/RECE will be monitored by a board member or designate. Evidence and record of monitoring of staff, support staff, and volunteers will be logged in the daily school journal. The Supervisor/RECE or Board member (or designate) will note compliance in relation to the Program Statement and *How Does Learning Happen?*

Evidence of monitoring will be kept for a minimum of three years in the daily journal of each respective year.

The following questions along with the "How Does Learning Happen?" framework will be reflected upon during the monitoring of staff and regular support staff:

- a) Did the staff member provide for the health and safety, nutrition, and well-being of the child?
- b) Did the staff member support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, volunteers and other staff?
- c) Did the staff member encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and did they support the children's ability to self-regulate?
- d) Did the staff member promote and foster the children's sense of exploration, play, and inquiry?
- e) Did the staff member provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences?

- f) Did the staff member plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development were supported?
- g) Did the staff member incorporate indoor and outdoor (when able) play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day giving consideration to the individual needs of the children?
- h) Did the staff member foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children?
- i) Did the staff member involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and other staff?
- j) Did the staff member partake in any activity that developed their knowledge in relation to continuous professional learning?

If any of the above expectations are not met, the following will take place:

- Verbal review and discussion on what areas need improvement for compliance and discussion on methods of improvement to meet the required expectations. This will be addressed at the annual review at the start of the school year.
- Upon review, any impact made from the strategies noted above on the children and their families will be documented in the daily journal
- If expectations are still not met or have not improved after one month of the review and discussion, the Contravention of the Program Statement Implementation Policy and of Prohibited Practices Procedure will take effect.

Prohibited Practices

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and adults as outlined in the program statement and in *How does Learning Happen?*

Children that experience a warm, supportive approach rather than a negative or punitive one to managing unwanted behaviour are much happier, less anxious, and more motivated to learn.

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will **not permit** the following with respect to a child receiving care at our centre:

1. Corporal punishment of the child.
2. 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.
3. Locking the exits of the childcare centre 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 Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool's emergency management policies and procedures.

4. 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.
5. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding.
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

No employee or volunteer of at Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool, or student who is on an educational placement at the centre, will engage in any of the prohibited practices set out above with respect to a child receiving childcare at our facility.

All staff and volunteers will verbally confirm that these practices are **not allowed** and will not or do not occur in the program.

Contravention of the Program Statement Implementation Policy & Prohibited Practices Procedure

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will monitor each staff, student and volunteer to assess whether policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented, as follows:

- The Board of Directors will observe and monitor the supervisor of the childcare centre;
- The Supervisor will observe and monitor the qualified staff in each program room (i.e., RECE or otherwise approved staff);
- The Supervisor will observe and monitor other program staff (i.e. assistants);
- The Supervisor will observe and monitor placement students; and
- The Supervisor will observe and monitor volunteers.

Monitoring and observations will be conducted on an ongoing basis through various means including, but not limited to:

- participating regularly and informally in the program;
- collecting feedback provided from parents and families; and
- reviewing written documentation (e.g., medication administration forms, daily written record, attendance records, etc.)

Monitoring will be conducted at different times of the day (e.g., morning, afternoon, periods of arrival/departure, rest periods, meal times, outdoor play periods, transitions, etc.) to observe that policies, procedures and individualized plans are being implemented as required for different parts of the program and daily routines.

Documentation and Records

Monitoring and observations will be recorded. Documentation of observations will be completed at the time the observations are made or at least two times a year and will include concrete examples of observed compliance and non-compliance.

All records will be stored in the school's administrative office for at least three years from the date they are created.

Follow-up

Any areas of concern with an individual's ability to comply with policies, procedures and individualized plans will be brought forward to the supervisor or designate.

The Supervisor will address their observations through a review and discussion with the individuals observed every year and will seek to or provide them with appropriate supports to achieve and maintain compliance (e.g. additional training).

Dealing with Contraventions of Policies, Procedures or Individualized Plans:

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will make every effort to clarify expectations and encourages staff, students, and volunteers to raise their questions and concerns about implementing policies, procedures and individual plans on an ongoing basis to support clarity, learning, development and ongoing compliance.

Progressive discipline may be used to address observed non-compliances with policies, procedures and individualized plans, taking into consideration the nature and severity of the incident, and the individual's history of previous non-compliances.

Where a staff, student or volunteer is observed to be non-compliant, the licensee, supervisor, or designate will take one or more of the following actions:

- Inform the individual that a non-compliance was observed, including the review of any pertinent records or documentation that provide evidence of the non-compliance;
- Re-review the relevant policies, procedures, and/or individualized plans with the individual;
- Issue a verbal warning;
- Issue a written warning;
- Temporarily suspend the individual from their position at the child care centre for a period of time, based on severity;
- Terminate the individual from their position;
- Inform any relevant parties (e.g. College of Early Childhood Educators, College of Teachers, College of Social Work and Social Services, the contact person for the program from which a student has been placed, CAS, police, etc.); and/or
- Report violations with the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics to the College

Where an observed non-compliance meets the criteria for a reportable serious occurrence (e.g. an allegation of abuse or neglect), the serious occurrence policy and procedures will be followed. Where appropriate, the supervisor or designate will follow up with the family of a child in accordance with our policies and procedures on parent issues and concerns.

Statement of Policies & Procedures

In accordance with the Ministry of Education and Ontario Regulation 137/15, Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool has devised and implemented a series of Policies and Procedures that are designed to protect the health, safety, and well being of all children, staff, volunteers, and students. Many of these policies can be found in the Policies and Procedures section of this handbook. All of the preschool's policies and procedures are available upon request either electronically or in hard copy, free of charge.

Implementation and Review of Policies, Procedures and Individualized Plans

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool shall ensure that the policies procedures and individualized plans (if applicable) it's required to have under the Child Care and Early years Act Regulation 137/15 are implemented.

The following is the list of required policies (other policies are also in place and must be read if you are interacting with the children in our program):

- Anaphylactic Policy
- Criminal Reference Check/Vulnerable Sector Check Policy
- Emergency Management Policies & Procedures (Including Fire Safety & Evacuation)
- Medication Policy
- Parent Issues & Concerns Policies & Procedures
- Playground/ Outdoor Safety Policy
- Policies & Procedures for Monitoring Compliance & Contraventions
- Program Statement Implementation Policy
- Sanitary Practices Policy
- Serious Occurrence Policy
- Sleep Supervision Policy
- Staff Training and Development Policy
- Supervision of Volunteers and Students Policy
- Wait List Policy

Individualized Plans will be reviewed by staff, volunteers, and students when such plans are applicable and available and before any interaction with the specific child/children or if modifications have been made. Please read the Individualized Plans section. Policies, Procedures and the Handbook will be sent electronically and made available through hard copy (within class) for review.

They will be reviewed as follows:

1. With staff before they begin their employment
2. With volunteers or students who will be interacting with the children in the classroom before they beginning volunteering or educational placement
3. At any time a change occurs in policy, procedure or individualized plan

Compliance and contraventions with the policies, procedures and individual plans (if applicable) will be monitored by the supervisor/RECE. The supervisor/RECE shall ensure that all policies are current. The supervisor/RECE will be monitored by a Board member or designate. Compliance will be monitored through observation of and verbal confirmation by staff, volunteers, and students as they follow the policies, procedures and individualized plans. Staff compliance will be observed twice per year, and noted and dated by the Supervisor.

Contravention of Policies, Procedures and Individualized Plans will be monitored through observation and through tracking of records.

Contraventions of Policies and Procedures, and Individualized Plans will be dealt with as follows:

1. Verbal warning (the individuals names, the date the incident and the person observing the incident will be recorded)
2. Written warning (the incident will be recorded using the: “Contravention of policies, procedures and individual plans” form) The individual will be given a copy of the warning in writing. The school will retain a copy. This second warning will also be recorded
3. Dismissal of the staff or withdrawal from the preschool for volunteers or students.

PART 2: OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES, & PRACTICES

Hours of Operation

School operates from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Late fees will apply if a child is picked outside of their designated pick-up time at a rate of \$5 for every 15 minutes.

Upon arrival, the parent/guardian must assist their child and take them directly to the playground or indoor play area. A staff member must be made aware of the child's arrival by the parent/guardian. Children must be signed in and out by a parent or staff member upon their arrival and departure.

If your child is not going to attend care as per usual, please inform the centre by 9 a.m. This will help us plan activities for the day. When your child does not attend preschool, you must call to let us know the reason; if it is a communicable illness, we are required to record this in case of other cases breaking out. If no one answers the phone, please leave a brief message. Also, upon arrival and preparing your child for the day, please help them or direct them to wash their hands before beginning to play with toys, in order to prevent the spread of germs.

Children must be picked up promptly at the end of the class. If someone else will be picking up your child please let staff know upon arrival. Before your child starts preschool, we will ask you to provide us with a list of adults who are authorized to pick your child up. Children will not be released to unauthorized individuals. If someone shows up to pick up your child and staff was not made aware of it, we will have to track you down to confirm that this is in fact permitted.

Custodial parents must have a court order on file with the school to prevent the child being released to the non-custodial parent.

School Closures

It is the preschool's policy to close the school when school boards are closed due to weather. If the local school buses are not operating, it's up to the discretion of the Supervisor and/or president if we open. (This will be based on school ratios, driving conditions, and factors that may or may not affect the centre.)

It's your responsibility to listen to the radio, check your Brightwheel emails, and follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/forteriepreschool) for information. All pertinent information on school closures will be sent to you through Brightwheel by 7:00 a.m. and posted on our Facebook page by 8:00 a.m. It's your choice and up to your discretion to send your child to school if we decide to open when school buses are not running. Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will not be liable for anything that happens due to your choice.

Tuition fees paid for days that the school is closed due to inclement weather will be credited on your final invoice in June. **There will be no refunds for missed classes due to illness.**

Fees & Registration

Before your child can attend any of our programs you must complete and provide the following documents:

- A completed Registration Package
- A copy of your child's most current Immunization Records (or signed waiver)
- Signed Consent Forms (as applicable)
- Registration Fee

- Signed Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures (Parent Handbook)

Spaces will not be held by verbal contract. Your Registration Fee must be paid in order for a spot to be held for your child. Once your Registration Package and Registration Fee have been received, you will receive a Welcome Package containing more information specific to the current year, including as a yearly calendar, important dates, and a *Getting to Know Your Child* profile for you to complete so we can understand your child's personality and preferences.

We strongly encourage you and your child to visit our centre prior to enrolment. This process allows your child to become more familiar with our preschool and staff. You may also visit our website (www.fepreschool.com) to take a visual tour the centre.

Tuition fees are payable on the 20th of each month, from September to June. Failure to remit payment may result in refusal of admittance at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Options may be discussed with treasurer/president.

Should fees be in arrears, the funds must be made good within three (3) business days or you will be asked to withdraw from the membership pending payment.

Our base fees are as follows:

Full-day programs (preschool & kindergarten): \$19.85

Full day program (toddler < 30 months): \$21.26

Our non-base fees are as follows:

Registration fee: \$150 (\$75 refunded if **all** General Meetings are attended)

NSF fee: \$40

Late pick-up fee: \$5 per 15 minutes

Activity fee: \$100

Base and non-base fees are subject to change.

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool is enrolled in the CWELCC, which aims to make quality child care more affordable for Canadian families. Tuition fees will be reduced according to the guidelines set out by the government, with the goal of child care fees being lowered to an average of \$10 per day by September 2025.

Financial Assistance (Tuition Subsidies)

Financial assistance may be available for qualifying families through the Regional Municipality of Niagara. Please contact the Regional Municipality of Niagara for further information. Subsidized families are expected to pay the difference between the school fees and the subsidized amount allotted.

Parents/guardians that use government subsidy to help pay for fees are responsible for renewing their authorization before it expires. If a parent/guardian does not renew their subsidy claim before their previous claim expires, the parent/guardian will be responsible for full fees until we receive authorization to bill the government and have received payment. If/when we receive back payment from the Region (for fees already paid for by the parents), we will reimburse the parents/guardians the subsidy amount.

Late Fees (For Picking Up Children)

Children are to be picked up promptly at the end of class to avoid late fees calculated at \$5 for every 15 minutes late. Late fees must be paid before your child returns to preschool.

Within the first 15 minutes your home will be called. If you have not picked up your child within the first forty (40) minutes and we have exhausted all means of trying to get a hold of you or your emergency contact, we will have no other alternative but to contact the police. Phone the school immediately if you know you will be delayed. **All reasonable excuses will be considered.** If late, you will be required to sign a late book.

Absences/Exclusion from Preschool

If your child is too sick to attend preschool, please keep him/her home. There is no “sick room” at the preschool, and the best place for a child to be recuperating from an illness is at home. There are also many symptoms that a child may have that may prevent them from being able to participate in everyday activities. If your child experiences any of the following please keep them home until they are gone, or are well enough to participate in normal everyday activities:

- Fever greater than or equal to 100.5°F (38.1°C)
- Excessive drainage (clear or discoloured) from the mouth, nose, eyes, or ears
- Red discoloration to the whites of the eye(s)
- Skin rashes as they are difficult to diagnose unless seen by a physician
- Severe abdominal pain, vomiting or diarrhoea
- A deep, hacking cough
- Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing
- Yellow discharge from the eyes
- An unusual yellow coloring of the skin or eyes
- Cuts or openings on the skin that are pus-filled or oozing
- Lice or nits

If your child is sent to preschool with any of the above listed symptoms, or they develop during the day, they will be sent home. ***Children should never be medicated and then sent to preschool*** (i.e., given Tylenol to break a fever). You should arrange for back-up care when your child is sick. There are no refunds or discounts for days that your child does not attend preschool.

Clothing

Children should come dressed in comfortable, seasonally appropriate clothing that can get dirty, since some activities we do on a daily basis are messy. Two spare changes of clothes (including socks and underwear) is required for all children in case of soiling of clothes. We want to keep your children happy and comfortable.

A separate set of indoor shoes is required at the preschool for each child during the winter. Public Health requires feet to be covered at all times when indoors. Indoor shoes also protect your child’s feet in the event of a fire drill in the winter months/rainy days.

Please also remember that whenever weather permits, the children spend a significant amount of time outdoors; make sure your child has the proper outerwear so that they are comfortable, warm, and protected from the sun.

Potty Training Policies

Children are encouraged to use the washroom regularly and to let us know right away when they need to use the washroom. Please provide extra clothing and remove soiled clothing daily. If we run out of clean clothes and underwear, you will be contacted during the day in order for you to provide them.

Evacuation Procedures

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool has emergency management policies and procedures. In case of emergency (fire/flood/otherwise), children and staff will be evacuated to Redstacks Retirement Home, located up the street at 303 Niagara Boulevard. This is just short walk from the centre, and that will be how the children are transported there. Emergency contact information will be transported along with us, so you will be contacted by telephone to pick up your child at the alternate location.

Transportation/Outings

For any field trips or outings that require transportation, parents are required to drive their own child and are welcome to stay for the outing, and then return their children back home with them, or back to the centre (whichever case may apply). ***No child will be permitted to go on any outing without written parental consent.***

Discipline

At Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool, discipline and guidance centres around respect and responsibility. Each child is expected to be a respectful, responsible member of our group. This ranges from children cleaning up their own “messes” to using manners and politeness when speaking with teachers, parents, and each other.

All “rules” centre on these respect/responsibility/safety guidelines. The only rules are those that are required to maintain a safe and respectful environment for all the children in our centre.

Child Abuse/Neglect

If there is any abuse or neglect suspected of any children in our care, we are required to report it to Family & Children’s Services (FACS). Please be aware that no child will be released under any circumstances to impaired individuals. If we have reason to believe that an individual picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, an emergency contact will be called to pick up the child. The incident will also have to be reported to FACS.

Our Daily Routine

7:30-8:30 a.m.	Quiet Activities & Breakfast Snack
8:45-9:30	Drop-off / Outdoor Play (weather permitting)
9:30 a.m.	Outdoor Forest Storytime
9:45 a.m.	Washroom Break
10:00 a.m.	Nutritious Snack
10:15 a.m.	Literacy Gathering
10:30 a.m.	Exploration Play & Craft Time
11:15 a.m.	Numeracy Gathering
11:30 a.m.	Movement, Music & Mindfulness
12:00 p.m.	Washroom break
12:10 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 p.m.	Nap & Quiet Play
2:30 p.m.	Washroom Break
2:40 p.m.	Science

3:00 p.m.	Nutritious Snack
3:15 p.m.	Outdoor Play
4:30 p.m.	Washroom Break
4:45 p.m.	Nature Story and Craft / Outdoor Clean-up
5:30 p.m.	Pick-up

This schedule is very flexible and we adjust it according to the day and the children. The number one goal is learning.

Items Needed From Home

- Reusable water bottle marked with your child’s name
- Nap bedding: We provide the sheet they sleep on, but you must provide a blanket for them to cover up with, as well as any comfort items that they may need to sleep (blanket, stuffy, etc.)
- Disposable diapers, training pants and wipes (for those who are in diapers or potty training)
- Spare clothing, including underwear and socks (2 complete sets)
- Sunscreen and a wide-brimmed hat
- Weather-appropriate clothing: jacket/splash/snow pants/hats/mitts, boots etc. **Please ensure you dress your child for outdoor play every day.**

Please ensure you child comes dressed in “play” clothes. Although we’re careful while doing art and playing outside, there are times when clothes can become dirty and stained. We appreciate your understanding and so do the children.

Snack and Meal Times

In an attempt to be as environmentally friendly as possible, we encourage parents/guardians to pack reusable water containers which will be refilled during the day as needed. At all times during drinking and eating, children are required to be seated and not engaged in any play activity. This is to ensure safety (to avoid choking) and to promote healthy eating/drinking habits.

Children who bring their own snacks or lunch to school due to diet restrictions, allergies and food sensitivities that cannot be accommodated by the school must bring their food in a lunch pail/bag clearly marked with the child’s name. The lunch bag/pail must include an ice pack; food will not be reheated in the microwave. The lunch pail/bag will be stored in the kitchen. Food cannot be shared.

Medications

All prescription and non-prescription medications are stored in a locked cupboard that is inaccessible to children. Children are not given any medication without the parents’ written consent. Written consent may only be on a “Permission to Administer Medications” form and all medications must be in their original bottles with original labels. Staff must also indicate on the administering form the date, time, and dosage of medicine given at each administration, and then initial this information.

For prescription medication, only the directions on the bottle will be accepted for administering the medication. In all instances, staff need to know when the child received his/her last dosage of the medication to ensure medication is given at appropriate times consistently.

With any prescription antibiotics, children may not return to care until they’ve had a full 24 hours of dosage, are no longer contagious, and are ready to participate in the full preschool day. This is to ensure they are well on the road to recovery.

Allergies

All allergies (and dietary concerns) will be clearly posted in each room, on the refrigerator and written on the child's emergency info/consent cards. Please note that ***we are a peanut-free facility***. If you send any food with your child, or donate any food to any functions held at the preschool, please ensure that these foods are peanut-free. If they do not have the appropriate symbols or ingredients list, they will not be served to anyone for safety reasons and will have to be returned home or discarded.

Developing Illness Policy

In the event your child becomes ill during the course of the day (to the point they are not capable of participating in regular activities), a parent/guardian will be contacted immediately and be required to come pick them up. If a parent/guardian can't be reached, the alternate emergency contact person will be called to come pick you child up. Allergy-related and common cold symptoms as well as non-communicable diseases/illnesses do not require that the child be excluded from care.

If any of the following conditions are present, the child must be excluded from care:

- Pain: any unexplained or undiagnosed pain
- Difficulty breathing: wheezing or persistent cough
- Fever (100.5°F/ 38.1°C or higher): child must be free from fever (without being medicated) for 24 hours before returning to care at the facility
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin or eyes (mucus/pus draining) or an undiagnosed rash
- Severe body or scalp itching
- Children with a known or suspected communicable disease/illness
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in 24 hours (may return to care after 24 hours without vomiting)
- Diarrhea (as defined by an increase in frequency and loosening of stool): 2 or more times in 24 hours (may return to care after 24 hours without loose stool/diarrhea)
- Just not feeling good: a child must be well enough to participate in the entire child care day to be at preschool

Your child may return to care when they are free of symptoms or are approved to return by the facility operator or (in some extreme cases) by a medical doctor.

*****Parents are required to inform staff of any serious illness or communicable /contagious disease (with their child or within their family) within 24 hours to allow other families within the child care centre to be alerted.*****

Communication

If you need to contact the preschool for any reason, please phone 905-871-2244. If you get our voicemail, please leave a message, as often we are out or busy with the children and unable to get to the phone at that moment. We do check messages regularly and return phone calls as soon as we get the chance. If you call outside of preschool hours, please leave a detailed message. Someone will return your call at our next earliest convenience.

Parent Involvement

Our doors are always open to parents and other family members who would like to be involved in their child's care and education. If any parents wish to volunteer at the centre, please contact the Supervisor so we can make the necessary arrangements.

Bingo

Bingo is our major fundraiser for the preschool and provides much-needed dollars to keep the centre open and our fees reasonable. All co-operative families are required to participate and do their share of bingos. All bingo volunteers must attend a short training session (prior to volunteering at a bingo) arranged by the Town's Community Gaming and Development Corporation. When helping at a bingo, please be at the bingo hall no later than 10 minutes before the start of the session. You must wear black pants and a bingo shirt provided by the school. If we do not have enough helpers, bingo sessions will be given to another organization and we could lose our bingo privileges entirely (and therefore lose out on the funds needed to keep the school functioning). Should you have any questions, please contact a member of the Bingo Committee or speak to the Supervisor.

Photographs/Video Cameras

We like to take lots of pictures at the preschool to share with the children, and to show the parents how much fun we have each day. We have some preschool photo albums that we place these pictures into (that do not leave the preschool centre), and we also have a public Facebook page and an Instagram account. You are welcome to download and save pictures and videos of your child from our Facebook or Instagram pages. Please respect the privacy of other families and **do not share photos from Brightwheel** if there are any children in the photo other than your own.

Withdrawal Of Services

We must be notified in writing by the last business day of the month if you plan to terminate childcare services. Even if your child does not attend school for a portion of the month, payment is still required for the entire month and is expected to be paid on the 20th of the month. Any fees not paid with regards to termination of childcare services will also be subject to daily late fees, until full payment is received. If fees are not paid, the unpaid bill will be placed into collections.

In the event of any concerns (raised by staff, parents/guardians or even children), a meeting can be scheduled to address the issues. The meeting will involve the Supervisor and involved staff member and the parents/guardians involved. The concerns will be clearly stated (e.g., late payment, failure to adhere to centre policies, behavioural problems, etc.) and discussed. Meeting minutes will be taken and solutions will be sought in a non-judgmental manner. A plan will be designed to resolve the issue. A second meeting will be scheduled to review the situation within a reasonable time frame. In the event the issue cannot be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, a written notice of termination of services will be given.

CHILD INTERACTION GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. Children will be guided in a positive manner that is appropriate to their age and development level.
2. Guidance will assist the children to learn self-discipline and appropriate behaviours.
3. Limits or rules of an activity or play area will be clearly outlined to all children. They will be repeated as needed.
4. Regular staff intervention will be in the form of praise, hugging, encouraging comments, and reminders to children of acceptable behaviour.
5. Where possible, intervention will permit logical consequences. Often just locating oneself to a situation without doing or saying a thing will stop a situation from developing.
6. Staff will use soft, supportive voices, model acceptable behaviour, and not discuss the child's behaviour in front of them.
7. Children in attendance will be supervised by an adult at all times.
8. If anyone feels herself/himself losing patience with a child or a situation, it's important to ask the teacher for assistance or relief. This is not viewed as a weakness but rather as professionalism. It happens to everyone occasionally but should never be a reason to penalize a child.
9. Gentle positive discipline is used in most cases. Redirection is usually enough.
10. Be aware to be uncritical of your own child's behaviour. The rules of behaviour at school may be different than at home and will change again when you are a volunteer in the classroom. Remember if you are frustrated or feel impatient with your child (or another child) ask the teacher for assistance. Removing yourself from the situation will help.
11. Allow the teacher to handle all discipline problems alone (including ones with your own child) unless you can redirect the child to a different activity.
12. Do be aware of and limit a child's activity by removal from the situation if he/she is
 - a) Hurting themselves or others
 - b) Destroying equipment
 - c) Losing self-control
 - d) If group is very boisterous—break up the activity and redirect each child
13. Guidance or discretion should be implemented as soon as possible after troublesome behavior.
14. All incidents must be reported to the teacher as soon as possible.

Methods of Managing Misbehaviour

In the event any child misbehaves, one of the following techniques will be employed:

1. Whenever misbehaviour is attention seeking, it will be ignored unless it presents a potential danger or is disruptive to others.
2. Children will be given clear direction regarding the limits of the play areas and routine.
3. Children unable to comply will be redirected to another activity.
4. Children will be given a choice of 2 or 3 alternate activities.
5. All forms of redirections or discipline must be reported to the teacher.

Parents, volunteers and staff are expected to follow and comply with the “Implementation Policy,” “Prohibited Practices,” and “Child Interaction Guidelines.” Criteria considered before contravention may be:

1. Seriousness of the offence
2. Legal requirements under the CCEYA and Child and Family Services Act or any other related laws
3. Actual or potential risk/harm to the child
4. Past performance of the individual
5. Frequency of the occurrence
6. Previous discipline required

PART 3: FORT ERIE CO-OPERATIVE PRESCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Anaphylactic Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool has policies and procedures are intended to help meet the needs and save the lives of children with severe allergies and provide relevant and important information on anaphylaxis to parents, staff, students, volunteers and visitors at the child care centre. The requirements set out in this policy align with Sabrina's Law, 2005.

Before attending the child care centre, the supervisor/designate will meet with the parent of a child to obtain information about any medical conditions, including whether the child is at risk of having or has anaphylaxis. Before a child attends the child care centre or upon discovering that a child has an anaphylactic allergy, an individualized plan and emergency procedures will be developed for each child with anaphylaxis in consultation and collaboration with the child's parent, and any regulated health professional who is involved in the child's care that the parent believes should be included in the consultation. All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be reviewed with a parent of the child twice a year to ensure the information is current and up to date.

All individualized plans and emergency procedures will include a description of symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction that are specific to the child and the procedures to be followed in the event of an allergic reaction or other medical emergency based on the severity of the child's symptoms.

The individualized plan and emergency procedures for each child will include information for those who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis about the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.

All individualized plans and emergency procedures will be made readily accessible at all times to all staff, students and volunteers at the child care centre and will be kept in the Preschool Management Binder.

Confidentiality Policy

A file of each child is kept in a secure and confidential location at Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool. Please be professional within the school. Gossiping and talking about other parents and/or children will not be permitted. Children progress at different levels and all parents do things differently. Please do not discuss these areas with others or outside the school. Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool maintains high standards in conduct. Respect the privacy of others. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated. If any parent, volunteer, or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled they can report the situation to the Supervisor or a Board member.

Criminal Reference Check/Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool requires a current VSC from all employees, volunteers, and students who interact with the children in our care. Every volunteer or student will be supervised by an employee at all times.

Any person who turns 18 while in a position where they interact with children at the child care centre will be asked by the Supervisor to provide a statement disclosing every previous finding of guilt under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) if they received an adult sentence. Any person who turns 19 while in a position where they interact with children at the child care centre will be asked by the Supervisor to apply for a VSC within one month after their 19th birthday. That person must provide the child care centre with evidence that they have submitted a VSC application.

All VSCs provided to the child care program must be intended for the position that the individual will hold (i.e., employee and volunteer positions). Where the VSC has not been provided for the correct position, it will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions made for individuals to obtain a criminal reference check (e.g., for medical reasons).

First Aid Policy

Every employee, including Resource Teacher/consultants will have a valid certification in Standard First Aid, including infant and child CPR, issued by a training agency recognized by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board or otherwise approved by a director. A copy of their certificate is to be kept in the office.

A First Aid kit and manual are located in the cupboard near the fridge in the kitchen. Please familiarize yourself with these items and the location they are stored.

Individualized Support Plans & Inclusive Planning Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool is inclusive to all children; this means we have a range of skills and abilities within our age group of children from 30 months to 6 years old. The children in our program will receive additional support through a Resource Consultant and a Special Support Consultant when necessary.

A developmentally appropriate Individualized Support Plan will be developed and implemented for each child with special needs to support each child to fully participate in an inclusive environment and reach their full potential. The Program Supervisor, Registered Early Childhood Educator and Resource Consultant, with input from the parent(s) of the child meet to create the goal plan and review and update the goal plan on an ongoing basis as the child's abilities, strengths/needs and circumstances change.

This Individualized Support Plan will list supports and aids, adaptations and or other modifications to the physical, social and learning environment that are necessary for the child to fully participate. The plan will include any instructions related to the supports or aids and the accommodations to the modified environment for the child.

Individuals who have participated in the development of the individualized support plan, including parent(s) of the child, are listed on the plan and must sign the plan. This may also include other support agency professionals who work with the child at Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool. The supervisor will ensure that there is a complete understanding of the child's support plan, how the environment will be modified, and any training of the use of aids and/or supports by the individuals involved with the child's plan. If the support plan is updated, the individuals involved will sign off on the revised plan.

No Smoking Policy

Smoking of any kind (i.e., electronic cigarettes, cannabis) is NOT permitted at any time within or around the premises of Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool and St. Paul's Anglican Church.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool encourages parents/guardians to take an active role in our child care agency and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our staff and child care providers. The school has an open door policy that works best when all parties involved work together for the benefit of the school as a whole.

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 goal is to engage parents/guardians in conversations and

support a positive experience during every interaction. By working as a team and respecting each other's differences and opinions, things will run smoothly. Should occasions arise where parents/guardians have concerns about the curriculum or the general operation of the school, it is advisable that the situation be dealt with properly to avoid repercussions.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool 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 (2) business days. 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.

REPORTING

Methodical Approach

The following provides an orderly, methodical approach to resolving concerns in a positive manner, and should be followed in the event a parent/guardian has a problem or concern:

1. Talk with the Supervisor about your concerns
2. Submit a written letter of concern to the Board of Directors/Executive
3. Contact the Program Advisor with the Ministry of Education

PROCEDURE

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Program-Related e.g: schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to -the child care provider directly; or -the licensee	-Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised; or -arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within five business days. Document the issues/concerns in detail.
General, Agency- or Operations- Related e.g: fees, placement, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to: -the licensee	Documentation should include: -the date and time the issue/concern was received; -the name of the person who received the issue/concern;

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Provider, Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Provider-, Staff- and/or Licensee-Related e.g: conduct of provider, agency head office staff, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to: -the individual directly; or -the licensee</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of the provider or staff that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported using the methodical approach as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>-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> <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>Related to Other Persons at the Premises</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to: -the child care provider directly; or -the licensee</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of other persons in a child care premises that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported using the methodical approach as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</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>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to: -the person responsible for supervising the volunteer or student; or -the licensee.</p> <p>Note: All issues or concerns about the conduct of students/volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported using the methodical approach as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, child care providers, other persons in the premises, 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 agency 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, child care provider, and/or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Ministry of Education Program Advisor.

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 local Children’s Aid Society (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*.

For more information, visit www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the centre’s Ministry of Education Program Advisor.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 must 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.

Contacts:

Lindsay Ostermann, Supervisor	905-871-2244	forteriepreschool@yahoo.ca
Taryn Scholtens, President, Board of Directors	289-687-1244	taryn_y@hotmail.com

The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documentation Act (PIPEDA)

The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) covers the collection, use or disclosure of personal information in the course of any commercial activity. This includes provincially regulated organizations.

Our responsibilities under this Act are fairly extensive, but in general we are mandated to inform you of the purpose of all personal information collected from you. During registration and throughout the year we collect information from you in order to best meet your child’s needs, give your child the best care possible, receive payment, and to meet legal, contractual and regulatory responsibilities. Some of the information we may collect includes:

- Name, Address, Phone Number
- Family Doctor’s Name
- Criminal Reference Check/Vulnerable Sector Check
- Child’s Immunization Record
- Emergency Contact Information
- Banking Information

We do not sell your information to third parties. Our procedures and systems are designed to protect your information from error, loss, or unauthorized access. Those people who have access to your personal information must enter into privacy (confidentiality) agreements with us. If you have a question or concern regarding the collection and protection of your personal information please speak to a member of the Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool Executive Board.

Playground and Outdoor Safety Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure that there are enough play materials available that are appropriate for the children's age and learning and developmental needs during outdoor play. The maximum capacity of the playground will not be exceeded at any time.

Outdoor play space, fixed play structures and surfacing checks will be conducted on a daily, monthly and annual basis. Any outdoor play space, fixed play structure or surfacing under those structures that is constructed or renovated will meet the requirements set out in the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard CAN/CSA-Z614-14, "Children's Playspaces and Equipment."

Supervision

- Children will be supervised at all times during outdoor play.
- Staff will position themselves throughout the playground and rotate their position where required to ensure children can be visually supervised while engaging in play.
- Staff to child ratios will be maintained on the playground at all times.
- Reduced ratios will never be used on the playground.
- Staff will ensure that there all gates are securely closed at all times.

Sleep Supervision Policy

All children attending preschool will have a scheduled nap/quiet time for a maximum of two hours per day. Provisions for quiet activities are made for those children who are not sleeping and become restless after 20 minutes.

All children will be assigned to individual cots. The centre will provide a bottom sheet for each cot and a blanket will be provided by each family. Part-time cots and sheets are disinfected after every use while full-time cots are disinfected once a week or on an as-needed basis.

Upon enrolment, parents will be provided with a copy of the centre's Sleep Policy and consulted in respect to their child's napping arrangements/preferences and then at any other appropriate time, such as transitions between programs or rooms or upon parent's requests.

Nap preferences will be documented in the new child packet upon enrolment. Changes can be provided to staff and will be kept on a clipboard by the Sleep Room, and will be reviewed by each staff or volunteer who will be working with the child.

Staff Training & Development Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool allows staff or parent volunteers that are involved with the children or the well-being of the school (board members) the opportunity to develop their knowledge and stay current in their profession. Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool will ensure this by taking the following steps:

1. Paying for membership to ECCDC (staff + board members) so they may have access to professional development workshops or resource materials.

2. Paying for and allot time for staff to attend workshops, conferences, meetings and professional training as stated in the individualized contracts between the board and employees. As stated in the contracts these are flexible and negotiable between staff and board.
3. Paying for board members to attend workshops and meetings that will allow them to gain knowledge in how to screen a co-operative preschool and how to meet requirements when doing so.
4. Paying for First Aid/CPR training and Safe Food Handling training for staff members.

Supervision of Volunteers and Students Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool welcomes both placement students and volunteers. We believe it is a valuable part in gaining experience in a child care environment. Volunteers and students also play an important role in supporting staff in the daily operation of child care programs.

Students and volunteers will always be supervised by an employee and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive child care. Students and volunteers *will not be* counted in staff-to-child ratios.

Student and Volunteer Supervision Procedures: Roles and Responsibilities

The licensee/designate must:

- Ensure that all applicable policies, procedures and individual plans are reviewed with students and/or volunteers before they start their educational placement or begin volunteering, annually thereafter and when changes occur to the policies, procedures and individualized plans to support appropriate implementation.
- Ensure that all students and/or volunteers have been trained on each child's individualized plan.
- Ensure that a vulnerable sector check (VSC) and annual offence declarations are on file for all students and/or volunteers in accordance with the child care centre's criminal reference check policy and procedures and Ontario Regulation 137/15.
- Ensure that expectations are reviewed with students and/or volunteers including, but not limited to
 - how to report their absence;
 - how to report concerns about the program;
- Inform students and/or volunteers that they are never to be included in staff to child ratios or left alone with children.
- Appoint supervising staff to the students and/or volunteers, and inform them of their supervisory responsibilities.
- Inform students and/or volunteers of their duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect under the Child and Family Services Act.

The supervising staff must:

- Ensure that students/volunteers are never included in staff to child ratios.
- Ensure that students/volunteers are supervised at all times and never left alone with children.
- Introduce students and/or volunteers to parents/guardians.
- Provide an environment that facilitates and supports students' and/or volunteers' learning and professional development.
- Provide students and/or volunteers with clear expectations of the program in accordance with the established program statement and program statement implementation policy.
- Provide students and/or volunteers with feedback on their performance.
- Work collaboratively with the student's practicum supervising teacher.

- Monitor and notify the centre supervisor/director of any student and or volunteer misconduct or contraventions with the centre’s policies, procedures, prohibited practices or individual plans (where applicable) in accordance with the child care centre’s written process for monitoring compliance and contraventions.

Students and/or volunteers must:

- Maintain professionalism and confidentiality at all times, unless otherwise required to implement a policy, procedure or individualized plan.
- Notify the supervisor or designate if they have been left alone with children or have any other concerns about the child care program (e.g., regarding staff conduct, program statement implementation, the safety and well-being of children, etc.).
- Submit all required information and documentation to the licensee, supervisor or designate prior to commencing placement or volunteering, such as a valid VSC.
- Review and implement all required policies, procedures and individualized plans, and sign and date a record of review, where required.
- Review allergy lists and dietary restrictions and ensure they are implemented.
- Respond and act on the feedback and recommendations of supervising staff, as appropriate.
- Report any allegations/concerns as per the “Duty to Report” under the *Child and Family Services Act*
- Complete offence declarations annually, no later than 15 days after the anniversary date of the last VSC or offence declaration (whichever is most recent) in accordance with the child care centre’s criminal reference check policy.
- Provide an offence declaration to the supervisor/designate as soon as possible any time they have been convicted of a Criminal Code (Canada) offence.

Wait-List Policy

Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool accepts all applications for enrolment on a first come, first serve basis. When a registration package is received, the date it is received is written on the application.

When the school is at capacity, a waitlist will be implemented. The request to be placed on the waitlist will be dated when the request is submitted, either verbally or in writing, and the child will be offered the spot when it becomes available. This also applies for children who are currently enrolled and are seeking additional days.

The preschool does not allow for leaves of absence; therefore, any family that enrolls their child and then later vacates the spot is doing so knowing re-admittance is not guaranteed. If the spot they’ve vacated has been filled, they will be added to the Wait List.

A form with the children on the waitlist will be managed by the Supervisor/RECE or the Administrative Assistant. The form will include the parent's name, the child's name, contact information (such as a phone number or e-mail address), the date the request to be placed on the waitlist was received, plus other comments that are applicable. This form will be located in a secure location in the office of the preschool.

The position of the child on the list will be verbally disclosed by the Supervisor/RECE or the Administrative Assistant to the family, in order to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of the children who are listed on it.

There is no fee required for the placement of a child on the waiting list for admission to Fort Erie Co-operative Preschool.