

Waubeeek
***Early Learning and
Child Care Centres***



Program Statement

Waubeek Early Learning and Child Care Centre

Our Philosophy

The philosophy at Waubeek Early Learning and Child Care Centre is to provide a safe, secure, healthy and enriching environment for the children in our care.

Implementation of our program is guided by the “How Does Learning Happen?” Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years, and in compliance with The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA).

Our learning environment offers children the opportunity to actively learn through play, enhancing physical, social and emotional well-being in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor. Each child is treated with respect, and accepted as a unique individual through positive, supportive adult-child interactions throughout the day.

Program Statement

This program statement outlines how our centre implements learning strategies in an emergent curriculum, based on our pedagogical document, “How Does Learning Happen?” Our educators believe that each child’s development is fostered through a sense of belonging, well being, expression and engagement (the four foundations of learning). Our centre offers children the opportunity to develop at their own pace in a diverse, and enriching environment.

Guiding Principles

The Learning Environment:

We believe that children thrive when they have the opportunity to engage in play experiences that encourage life skills through exploration, problem solving and social interaction with adults and their peers.

Play Based Learning:

Educators provide open ended activities in a learn through play environment that encourages children to explore new materials throughout the day, expanding their foundation for early learning.

Fostering Positive Relationships:

Our classrooms create an atmosphere of trust and warmth by engaging in open and honest relationships with children and recognizing that each child is a unique individual. Each

educator takes the initiative to create trusting relationships with each child to foster their growth and development at their own pace.

Inclusivity:

It is an essential part of our program to create an inclusive atmosphere where each child feels valued, respected and supported. Diversity is acknowledged and celebrated, and accommodations for children with unique needs are a paramount priority.

How do we implement the 4 Foundations of “How Does Learning Happen?”

1. Belonging

The environments are designed to build trusting and genuine relationships with children and provide a safe space for children to feel a sense of belonging and community. Programs have established predictable daily routines that the children follow throughout the day and any variation from this routine is discussed with the children, to enable them to prepare for the change in advance. We embrace a community-based atmosphere that encourages families to become actively involved in our programs and events. We welcome families to participate in opportunities to share aspects of their diverse backgrounds, cultures and languages with our staff and children, to promote an accepting and inclusive environment.

Our classrooms and outdoor environments are designed to allow for exploration and engagement in a safe space that encourages and fosters risk competence. The children's artwork is displayed at their level to reinforce a sense of self esteem and self worth. Family photos are displayed and accessible for the children to identify their family, and to associate other children's families as part of their community.

2. Well-Being

The priority at Waubeek Early Learning and Child Care Centre is to provide a safe and healthy environment that promotes physical, emotional and mental well-being. Our indoor and outdoor play spaces are carefully monitored and inspected multiple times throughout the day by the staff. Our outdoor environment is designed to encourage the children to explore physical activity with a variety of materials and play structures.

Menus are designed to provide nutritious meals and snacks that have been carefully planned in accordance with Canada's Food Guide, and all food is prepared fresh on premises daily.

During mealtime, we focus on helping children to establish a healthy relationship with food: learning to self regulate and to identify their body's cues when eating. Educators encourage children to try new foods, and model healthy eating habits with them in a shared eating environment. Mealtime is supported by conversation and encouragement for children, and

all attempts to try new foods are respected by educators at the children's personal level of comfort.

We respect and appreciate children's individual needs for rest, comfort and self care. Independence is encouraged, and we guide children to master self help skills through trial and error, and positive support at each attempt at a new skill (toileting, dressing, manipulating eating utensils and drinking from cups etc.).

All staff recognize that children are just learning how to navigate through their world and acknowledge that this can cause some feelings of stress or anxiety. Our goal is to help children learn to self regulate and develop emotional literacy. Giving them the language to express their emotions and to provide tools and techniques that will help them return to a calmer state (i.e.) breathing technique, sensory "squishy" toys) will help children to understand their bodies reactions to stress and find what works best for them.

We implement a Seeds of Empathy program with our children who will be entering into kindergarten the following year. This program involves literacy circles specifically focusing on feelings and emotions. We invite a family with a young infant to participate in the full 30-week program, with their baby being welcomed as our "tiny teacher". The family visit occurs every 2 weeks, and the children are encouraged to describe how they think the baby is expressing his/her emotions, and to acknowledge the physical changes and milestones the baby is reaching at each visit. The staff document these observations and reflect on them with the children. The staff can share these experiences with the parents through visuals and written highlights on the Lillio app. Through this program, the children are developing a sense of empathy and the understanding of body language cues. We extend this learning through activities, songs and specifically chosen story books.

3. Engagement

Our emergent curriculum approach provides engaging and meaningful experiences that are based on the children's interests and developed through documented daily observations by the educator.

The children invite the educators to join them as a play partner, which allows the educator to encourage creativity, problem solving and critical thinking opportunities. Offering a varied and rich learning environment that includes music and movement, arts and crafts, sensory play, language and literacy and ongoing opportunities for social interactions helps children to develop competence and a positive self image.

The growth and development of each child is documented daily, allowing the educators to reflect on the program and plan for future learning experiences that encompasses the interests of all the children in their care. Educators reflect on both written and visual documentation when planning activities so that the unique interests and needs of each child can be supported and acknowledged.

4. Expression

We provide a language rich environment that encourages children to communicate at their current level of ability, without feeling pressure or judgement. Allowing the children to engage in art, music and dramatic play supports their creativity and individuality in a trusted, familiar environment.

Storytelling and literacy development is promoted through a variety of books and always having writing materials available throughout the day. A literacy-based program includes written and pictorial labels, and throughout the environment we display our letter links (the child's name and a picture beside it that starts with the same sound as the first letter in their name). This encourages children to feel a sense of belonging and ownership, and associates their letter link, and the other children's letter links, with phonetic awareness and early reading skills.

Each child is a unique and individual learner, and the educators support each child at their own pace and comfort level. Providing intentional opportunities for social/dramatic play in multiple areas of the classroom reinforces emotional awareness and encourages language through social interactions. The educators support this through role modeling, labeling and discussing emotions, and guiding them by co-regulating through conflict resolution geared towards achieving a positive outcome for all.

Behaviour Management

We promote self-esteem by protecting the emotional and physical well-being of children in our program, ensuring consistency with respect to setting age and developmentally appropriate limits for children. We consider external sources in behaviour management plans and practice a common philosophy of permitted behaviour practices, such as redirection, getting to their level and speaking to them in a developmentally appropriate way or suggesting what they can do.

Prohibited practices include:

- Corporal punishment (e.g., hitting, slapping, spanking or physical restraints)
- Any harsh or degrading measures that would cause humiliation or undermine a child's self-respect
- Deprivation or withholding a child's basic needs include food, shelter, clothing, or bedding.
- Confinement

Ongoing Evaluation and Improvement

We regularly evaluate our program to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the children and families we serve. We use a variety of methods to gather feedback, including parent surveys, educator reflections, and observations of children's learning. We use this feedback to make

program improvements and ensure that our program continues to reflect best practices in early childhood education.

This program statement serves as a living document and reviewed by program staff and updated annually to reflect our ongoing commitment to providing high-quality care and early learning experiences for all children.

All new program staff, students and volunteers will review the Program Statement upon hire and prior to interacting with children sign the Program Statement Implementation Policy. A review of the program statement is completed annually or when the document has been modified.

The program supervisor will ensure that all the approaches set out in this program statement are adhered to by monitoring all staff, students, and volunteers. Observations are addressed, recorded, and reflected in the employees' annual/appropriate performance review.

