

Discovery Station

EMERGENT LEARNING

Where children come to learn through play



Oakville Parent-Child Centre

905-849-6366 www.op-cc.ca

461 North Service Road West, Unit 17

Previously Discovery Station Nursery School

2019/2020

General Information Booklet

Table of Contents

FEE SCHEDULE 2019-2020	3
HOW TO REGISTER.....	3
OPCC - WHO WE ARE.....	4
PROGRAM STATEMENT	4
Foundation: Belonging.....	5
Foundation: Well-Being.....	6
Foundation: Engagement	7
Foundation: Expression	9
QUALITY FIRST	11
INCLUSION POLICY.....	11
GENERAL INFORMATION	11
PROGRAM SCHEDULE.....	11
CHILD CARE WAIT LIST POLICY	11
TAX RECEIPTS	12
RETURNED CHEQUES.....	12
WITHDRAWALS	12
INCLEMENT WEATHER & CLOSURES	12
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING	12
VIDEOTAPING & PHOTOGRAPHS	12
SUPERVISION POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS	13
PROGRAM INFORMATION.....	13
Meet and Greet.....	13
Age Groupings	13
Arrival and Pick-Up.....	13
Program Content	13
Extended Day Program	14
Walks	14
Clothing.....	15
Diapers	15
Snack/Lunch	15
Special Days.....	15
Toys.....	15
Visits	15

“Some things about Me”	15
YOUR CHILD’S HEALTH AND WELLBEING	16
Sanitary Procedures	16
Health Care Policies.....	16
Allergies and Administration of Medication	17
Individual Plans	17
CHILD GUIDANCE	17
PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURE.....	18
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY	19
REPORTING PROCEDURES	19
Incident/Accident Forms.....	19
Serious Occurrence	20
Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child	20

FEE SCHEDULE 2019-2020

Toddlers – 18 to 30 months	Location	Fee per Month
• 2 Days: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00-11:30am	NSR-Main – Toddler Room	\$295/month
• 3 Days: Mon/Wed/ Fri 9:00-11:30am	NSR-Main – Toddler Room	\$395/month
• 5 Days: Monday-Friday 9:00-11:30am	NSR-Main	\$690/month

Preschool – 2 ½ to 5 years	Location	Fee per Month
<i>Extended Day*</i>		
• 3 Days: Mon/Wed/Fri 9:00am-1:00pm <i>*includes hot catered lunch</i>	NSR-Main – Early Learning Room	\$600/month
<i>Regular Morning Programs</i>		
• 2 Days: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00-12:00pm	NSR-Main – Preschool Room	\$335/month
• 2 Days: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00-12:00pm	NSR-Main – Early Learning Room	\$335/month
• 3 Days: Mon/Wed/ Fri 9:00-12:00pm	NSR-Main – Preschool Room	\$430/month
• 5 Days: Monday-Friday 9:00-12:00pm	NSR-Main – Preschool Room	\$765/month

HOW TO REGISTER

At the time of registration, please submit:

- Your completed Registration Form which includes a second and third choice of program**
- Consent form**
- A copy of your child’s Immunization record** (*for exemptions a Statement of Conscience/Medical Exemption/Religious Belief form is required*)
- \$50.00 Family Registration Fee** (September 2019 – June 2020 Discovery Station registration)
- Deposit of one month’s fee which covers your June 2020 payment** (registration fee + deposit can be combined on one cheque, currently dated) Payable to OPCC (Oakville Parent-Child Centre)
- Pre-authorized payment form completed with a void cheque attached – monthly fees are to be paid by pre-authorized withdrawals.**
- Review entire General Information Booklet and sign off on Registration Form**

Discovery Station Year

Programs will start the week of September 9, 2019 and end the week of June 22, 2020.

Registration Fee

\$50 non-refundable family registration fee applies to the September 2019-June 2020 school program.

Withdrawal

\$25 family administration fee is charged for withdrawal from the Discovery Station program. If you withdraw your child(ren), 30 days written notice is required. Please refer to the **WITHDRAWALS** section of this General Information Booklet for more details.

OPCC - WHO WE ARE

Oakville Parent-Child Centre (OPCC) offers a variety of programs and services including drop-ins, parenting support & workshops, Discovery Station, and resource libraries. OPCC is the EarlyON Child and Family Centre for Oakville. The mission of OPCC is to support, nurture and empower children and their families as they learn and grow together.

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The Program Statement is a requirement of the Child Care and Early Years Act. In this version, the Discovery Station programs are referred to on occasion. It is important to note that we are working towards achieving the goals and implementing the approaches in all OPCC programs.

Our View of Children: OPCC believes children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential. Children are intrinsically motivated to learn and when provided with enriched environments, nurturing adult interactions, support and the freedom to explore, they can become self-motivated learners.

Our understanding of children has evolved over time and is influenced by ongoing research, experience, collaboration with families and community partners. The ability to adapt and change has allowed OPCC to be responsive and flexible with program opportunities for children and families.

Supporting children's social and emotional growth is at the forefront of our work. Our caring, trained and nurturing Educators promote children's social and emotional development, knowing that these are key foundational skills for success later in life. Role modelling, full engagement in children's play, and environments that are constructed with social and emotional health in mind, are just a few of the ways we do this.

Families come in various shapes and sizes and with a great number of strengths. Parents are children's first and most important teachers, and always want what is best for their children. We believe in the capacity of parents to raise resilient, healthy, successful people, but we were never meant to raise children alone. OPCC is a part of the support system that families need to do the important work of parenting. We recognize that parents are the experts of their children and know them best. We work hard to create a safe, warm and inviting place for families to learn and grow together. **Parents are always welcome to participate, share, network and get involved at OPCC.**

As providers of high quality licensed childcare in Oakville, we participate in the **Quality First Initiative** (refer to the Discovery Station Handbook for more details). **We are governed by the Ontario Ministry of Education (MEDU) and regulated by Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA).**

OPCC has embraced and is working with the Ministry of Education's *How Does Learning Happen?* (HDLH) framework. At the core of this framework are relationships. The foundations of HDLH include; Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression.

Foundation: Belonging

Goals for Children: Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.

Approaches / How We Do It: A sense of belonging allows children to feel safe and secure in their environment and with the people around them. When we belong, we are able to develop deeper attachments and a willingness and enthusiasm to listen, learn and interact with others. All children are welcome to participate in our programs.

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults. Children will experience warm supportive relationships in our programs and because of this they are happy and motivated to learn. Experiencing positive relationships in the early years has significant long term impacts on their physical and mental health, and they will go on to have success in school.

Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and Educators

- Educators encourage and support children's social development with adults and peers – The Committee for Children's Second Step Program guides social development in the program
- Educators are committed to providing positive nurturing relationships that help children feel inspired and connected to adults and to each other
- Parents are invited to join us for our Meet & Greet orientation where classrooms can be explored and families can meet their children's teachers. Later in the year, opportunities to visit classrooms are encouraged and classroom support is welcomed (see Discovery Station Handbook for more details)
- Parents are encouraged to share information or concerns about their children, keep educators updated or inquire about their children at any time – Educators are able to chat at a mutually agreeable time
- Educators provide families with information on play and the importance of play
- Educators are positive role models with the children, each other and other adults

Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

- Educators are open to conversations with parents about their children and welcome feedback and questions
- Through pedagogical documentation, daily exploration forms, monthly menus, monthly reflections, parent visits and newsletters, parents are provided with information about what the child is doing in the program. Even a chat at the door, helps keep parents connected with their educators. Parents who wish to speak to an educator about their child are welcome to schedule a time that is convenient for both parties.
- Parents are encouraged to keep Educators informed about their child's health and wellbeing

- Special events in our licensed programs happen throughout the year, e.g. Holiday parties, Mother’s Day and Father’s Day visits
- All OPCC families are welcome to attend the many special events happening throughout the year e.g. Breakfast with Santa, Dad’s Hike, and Parenting Conference
- Parents are encouraged to share their special talents with the class and are welcomed to schedule time to come into the program and share with the children
- Educators observations and feedback are provided to each family at the end of the year, using the ELECT document as our framework
- Handouts, information and articles of interest are frequently shared with parents. OPCC has a full time Family Support Coordinator that is available to support parents with parenting questions and concerns.
- When required, meetings with families are set up to discuss goals, additional support and progress for the child. Discussion, decisions, plans and ideas are documented in their child’s file.

Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and Educators

- OPCC welcomes and encourages community partners to work with us to support children, parents and Educators at the centre
- Service coordination meetings and team meetings can be facilitated for children with differing abilities
- Throughout the year we invite interesting community programs to visit and share their expertise and expand children’s knowledge and understanding e.g. Humane Society, fire department
- Partnering with agencies, staff training takes place to support staff in providing a quality program
- Supports for children and their families are offered in a holistic, family centred way. Close partnerships with other agencies allow us to provide service coordination and family meetings when needed to set goals for children’s growth and development.
- With collaborative relationships and excellent communication we work to ensure positive outcomes for children and families.

Foundation: Well-Being

<i>Goals for Children:</i> Every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being.
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Approaches / How We Do It: The health, safety, nutritional needs and well-being of children are very important and we know are foundational to children’s ability to learn. We have rigorous policies in place around health and safety practices and these are reviewed by all Educators on a regular basis.

Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children

- Health checks of children upon arrival – see booklet for further information about when a child is ill
- Regular environmental checks – of toys, equipment and classrooms for hazards and cleanliness
- To reduce the transmission of illness, staff and children wash their hands upon arrival, before and after snacks and meals, after toileting, before and after water play and other times as needed
- Varied and nutritious snacks and lunches are provided in accordance with Canada’s Food Guide – see menus posted by classrooms
- Filtered drinking water is available for children as needed

- Staff flexibility allows us to provide extra support for children when a little more nurturing is needed, offer more adult guidance for peer to peer interactions, and foster warm, responsive adult child relationships

Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate

- Educators guide children through transitions by providing cues to prepare children ahead of time and using visual pictures and schedules in the program and during routines. Using routines and cues at transition times helps prepare children so they know what to expect, which helps make them feel safe and secure.
- Children are encouraged to question and explore, share their ideas and co-learn with their teachers
- Educators model appropriate behaviours and support child to child interactions when conflicts arise
- Comfort and nurturing are provided when children are needing help or just want a cuddle; quiet cozy areas of the room are provided for children to go to when desired
- Children’s self-regulation is encouraged and supported through interactions and guidance from Educators
- Educators help children to develop self-awareness, learn how to recognize feelings in themselves and others, and build a “toolbox” of strategies that can help them to calm their emotions and find appropriate ways to express themselves. These are all essential skills that contribute to future success in school, work and relationships.

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 child care

- As a half day program, OPCC is not required to have outdoor playground. We understand the need for children to build their gross motor competence, so we offer gross motor activities daily in the program.
- Through active music circles, children utilize large muscles which also support the development of a healthy body and mind
- Quiet time is available during the program, children can look at books in the book area or can find a quiet area in the classroom – these spaces can offer much needed soothing time and helps with developing self-regulation
- Our Educators respect the wishes of the parents and, when possible, provide alternatives or modifications when requested e.g. a special dietary request for a short period of time

Foundation: Engagement

Goals for Children: Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses.

Approaches / How We Do It: At OPCC children and families are able to experience a variety of safe, clean, age appropriate and interesting environments that nurture children’s healthy growth and development. OPCC fosters children’s emerging independence, self-confidence, and skill development.

Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry

Play and exploration are at the core of early learning. The environment is where learning is fostered and takes place. To this end, you will find our environments rich with materials and resources for children to use as they construct ideas, try out hypothesis, and explore new and interesting materials. Just as important as the materials in the environment are the people. Our Educators are highly trained professionals and everyone is committed to making your experience at OPCC a memorable one. Our teaching staff understand children and families and work tirelessly to ensure every child has a positive experience.

- OPCC believes that children learn through play and are given opportunities to explore, test, try and learn in a collaborative classroom environment
- Educators will provide a resource rich environment for children to discover and experience

Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

Play is children's work and is essential to healthy development. We understand that not all play is equal and child directed play provides the best learning opportunities. We all learn best when we are engaged and interested in an experience. When Educators listen and observe children, they can develop a deeper understanding of children's interests and perspectives. Programs at OPCC offer children ample opportunity to direct their play and explore new ideas and expand old ones. The role of adults in children's play is to enhance the children's experiences, not to take over or determine the direction of the play. Adults support ideas, provide resources and materials, help children reflect on what they know and think, and provide emotional support and encouragement.

In the program, children will find:

- Opportunities for room exploration in variety of activities
- Open ended materials are available and allow for exploration and discovery
- Group times and individual interactions that allow for discovery of areas of child's interest which leads into further opportunities of discovery
- They are invited to share their ideas and interests with Educators and peers. Interests and ideas are documented and explored by Educators and children together.

Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported

As a result of our view of children as competent, curious and capable, our Educators work as partners with children in the learning process. Great things are possible when Educators and children are able to see themselves as both student and teacher. There is much to learn from children and through inquiry, open ended questions, provocation and hands on experiences, our Educators extend children's learning and challenge thinking.

To respect, preserve and enhance children's learning we are developing a practice of documentation. Documenting children's learning allows them to see where they have come from, makes learning visible, and encourages children to revisit their ideas. In addition, the documentation helps the adults to better understand children's perspectives and ideas, and when appropriate work with children to encourage further exploration of knowledge and ideas.

- Educators will observe children's areas of interest and reflect upon it in order to provide experiences that will encourage the children to explore and ask questions
- Educators refers to the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) document, which provides comprehensive, detailed child development information. It is used to help determine skills that Educators can be working on with children.
- Educators will provide children the opportunity to wonder and provide time for children to discover more about their areas of interest
- Through the use of daily exploration postings, monthly reflections and documentation, Educators will offer insight and feedback about children's learning and activities while participating in the program
- Children with differing abilities who are working with Halton Region Inclusion Services will have individual goals established in conjunction with the parents and will have an individual plan created for them
- Educators have opportunities to spend time together to share their observations, reflect upon their observations and plan for the interests of the children in the group

Foundation: Expression

Goals for Children: Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways

Approaches / How We Do It: The ability to express thoughts, emotions, needs and wants is an essential part of healthy growth and development for children. Children who are able to express themselves in a variety of ways feel more competent, understood by others, are able to develop the ability to self-reflect and communicate more effectively. Expression is a complex and creative process. Many would say that the use of language is our primary way of expressing ideas and feelings; however we believe there are many other ways for children to share themselves with others. The arts (music, dance, song and art), storytelling, conversation and behaviour are all forms of expression. Our Educators understand the complexities of communication and work hard to enhance children's abilities by offering children a variety of ways to explore and develop communication competence.

- Educators respond to children's efforts to communicate, whether it is pointing, gesturing, requesting, crying, or through body language. Educators are there to understand and support children's needs
- Challenging behaviour is often an expression of difficult feelings and/or unmet needs. Our Educators seek to understand more deeply what children are expressing and help them to verbalize their feelings and meet their needs
- Educators use visual tools to help communicate with the children
- Educators support language development through the extension of language, modeling and encouragement
- Educators use paraphrasing when responding to children when necessary, encouraging their efforts and helping them to feel listened to and have a sense of belonging
- Ongoing conversations between children and adults, support language development and expression
- Using a variety of open ended materials and art mediums, children are encouraged to express themselves creatively
- Creative expression of ideas and feelings are fostered and encouraged by Educators

- If required, referrals for communication support are provided to families
- Dance, music and song are recognized and encourage as expressive outlets

Quality knowledgeable Educators

Support Educators who interact with the children at OPCC in relation to continuous professional learning

- OPCC provides an annual half day of professional development for all staff
- In house training opportunities are available throughout the year
- Through ongoing information shared in the child care community, information is provided to staff on a regular basis
- Our caring, responsive knowledgeable educators have various qualifications including a passion to providing a stimulating learning environment. Our Early Childhood Educators are registered with the College of ECE and other staff have a wide variety of experiences and qualifications
- All staff have completed a Criminal Reference Check including the Vulnerable Sector Screen and all program staff are required to have a valid certificate in standard first aid with infant and child CPR
- Community agencies can support Educators through in house training for children with differing abilities which can benefit all children
- As a Quality First participant, we receive ongoing training and support

Our commitment to quality programs

Document and review the impact of the strategies set out above on the children and their families

- Families are encouraged to provide informal feedback on an ongoing basis
- Families are given the opportunity to complete an annual Discovery Station evaluation at the end of each school year
- Reflective observations about the program are discussed amongst Educators when the program is done. Educators share and debrief their observations with each other and discuss plans for how to build on what the children are interested in and doing
- Policies and procedures are reviewed annually
- This program statement will be reviewed annually by all staff, students and volunteers. Staff, parents, students and volunteers are notified in writing of any revisions to this program statement
- The Discovery Station Handbook is reviewed annually and shared with parents and Educators
- All new staff, students and volunteers review this program statement prior to interacting with children and when the program statement is modified

Through observations in programs, OPCC will ensure that the approaches set out in the program statement are implemented in the operation of Discovery Station Emergent Learning programs.

Visit <https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf> to review the full *How Does Learning Happen* document.

QUALITY FIRST

OPCC's Discovery Station Emergent Learning Program is a **Quality First** program. Quality First is an early learning initiative providing all licensed childcare programs in Halton region with the opportunity to participate in a developmental model for quality improvement.



What Quality First means to your child

Quality First helps to create positive, meaningful and sustained change in the design and delivery of quality child care and learning in the Halton child care community by:

- Developing the professionalism of individuals involved in the care and education of young children
- Improving the level of quality indicators in children's programs
- Collaborating with local colleges to promote professional readiness of early childhood educators

INCLUSION POLICY

Our Centre takes pride in offering our programs to all children, regardless of the level of their need. All children are welcomed into our programs and our staff promotes inclusive social play and full participation (same hours and same days) in all routines and activities in the classroom. Our program includes children with extra supports in approximate proportion to their presence in the population (*this means that the number of children with special needs that is enrolled is similar to the number of children with special needs in the community, i.e. the classroom is integrated with children with special needs*). Our philosophy fosters an environment of mutual respect and understanding which supports the whole family during their preschool journey. Working collaboratively with professionals from Children's Resource Services, Halton Region and our community partners, our staff strives to ensure a positive outcome for all families and children.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Licensing - Our Discovery Station program is licensed under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA). Each location is inspected annually by the Ministry of Education – Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch. The CCEYA contains requirements specific to staff qualifications and ratios, program content and equipment. The Ontario government is committed to increasing transparency and parent access to information about licensed child care programs across the province via the Licensed Child Care Website www.gov.on.ca/ONT/portal61/licensedchildcare. The Licensed Child Care Website will also provide more detailed licensing information for our centre. Parents are welcome to ask for an explanation of the inspection findings, and can review the licensed summary report.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The fall schedule of programs will commence the week of September 9, 2019. For details specific to days, times and cost, please refer to the **Fee Schedule**.

CHILD CARE WAIT LIST POLICY

Parents are welcome to place their child on our wait list without being charged a wait list fee. At any time, parents are able to check the status of their child's placement on the wait list while maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of children on the list. When a space becomes available, we contact the first person on the wait list that is eligible for that program.

TAX RECEIPTS

Receipts will be issued at the end of the calendar year and will be mailed to you in February. If you misplace your receipts, please contact the Supervisor to obtain a duplicate. ***A fee of \$10.00 per receipt will be charged for each duplicate requested. Please ensure that we have the legal name required for processing the tax receipt correctly.***

RETURNED CHEQUES

Any cheques that are returned by your bank (NSF, etc.) are subject to a \$20.00 administration fee.

WITHDRAWALS

A **\$25.00 administration fee is charged for each withdrawal** from a program. Upon withdrawal from a program, **the \$50.00 Registration Fee will not be refunded.** Thirty days written notice is required for withdrawals. If 30-days written notice is not given, your deposit will be withheld. The 30-day period commences on the date written notice is received by OPCC. If the 30-day notice is received, your deposit will be returned ***less a \$25.00 administration fee.*** In addition, for the month of September 2019, if you withdraw your child after August 9th, 2019, then your deposit will be withheld and will cover the month of September's fees. If a child is removed without notice, your deposit will be withheld. OPCC holds the right to terminate care immediately if any of the following situations occur; nonpayment of program fees, chronic late pick up and/or other extreme situations.

INCLEMENT WEATHER & CLOSURES

The program will be cancelled if the **Halton District School Board** closes the schools for the Oakville area due to weather conditions. You can check their website for up-to-date information at www.hdsb.ca, listen to your local radio station, watch CHCH television station or sign up to receive notification via e-mail regarding school closure information. You can sign up for our email on our website at www.op-cc.ca ***Please note that we do not call parents on snow days.*** Parents will not be reimbursed for cancellations due to weather conditions. OPCC also follows the Board's scheduled closures for two weeks at Christmas and one week at March Break. The Centre is closed for all Statutory Holidays as well as Family Day and Easter Monday. **There are no fee reductions for any of these closures.** However, if a program room is closed due to circumstances beyond our control and an alternative room is not available, parents will be reimbursed for each day the class is cancelled with the exception of the first day that the program room is closed.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

OPCC is committed to providing Professional Development training for our staff. We hold a half day training session in October and as a result this may affect your child's program. Our Professional Development training is scheduled for the afternoon of **Tuesday, October 22nd, 2019.** Parents will not be reimbursed for this time.

VIDEOTAPING & PHOTOGRAPHS

OPCC will only permit parents or guardians to use their cameras or video cameras at Discovery Station special events when parents are invited to participate i.e. Christmas, Farewell party etc. If a parent objects to their

child being in a picture or being videotaped at this time, it is their responsibility to make staff aware of their concern -- then we'll make a decision about the use of videotape or photos.

SUPERVISION POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

Under the CCEYA, OPCC is required to ensure that every child who is in attendance in a day nursery is supervised by an adult at all times. OPCC will ensure that no child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age. Only employees will have direct unsupervised access to children. Occasionally students/volunteers may be part of our program and will be supervised by employees at all times and will not be left unattended with children. Students and volunteers will not be counted as part of the teacher/child ratios.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Meet and Greet

The first day of your child's program in September is Meet & Greet. This is an opportunity to come to school, **stay with your child** as you visit the classroom, meet the Educators, classmates and get a brief overview of the program. Your child's first day on their own will be the second day of the program. A reminder notice will be provided in August with more details.

Age Groupings

We offer a Toddler program for children 18 to 30 months and a Preschool program that is for children 2½ to 5 years. In both of these age groupings, we may be able to accept a child who is 17 months in the Toddler group and a child who is between 2 and 2 ½ years in the Preschool group. If you would like more information on these spaces, please contact the Centre before submitting your registration.

Arrival and Pick-Up

When you arrive, you will be required to sign your child into the program and indicate who will be picking up your child at departure time. Please notify a member of the program staff that your child has arrived prior to leaving the Centre.

"Departure" from Discovery Station is of equal importance, so please be available to collect your child by their pick-up time. When you pick-up your child, you will sign your child out and notify a program staff member that you are leaving. In the interest of safety, we cannot allow a child to leave the classroom with someone we do not know. Your child will only be released to those people designated on your registration form. We require that any new authorized pick-ups provide photo identification at departure time. In the event of extenuating circumstances, changes to the designated people must be submitted in writing from a parent or guardian to the Teacher.

Program Content

Our programming encourages the teaching team to plan and implement the curriculum based upon the children's interests and development. The Educators will continuously observe and brainstorm in order to provide experiences that will encourage the children to explore and ask questions. The Teachers refer to the *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)* document that provides guidance on children's development. This document is used to help determine skills we should be working on with children. We will provide a

monthly reflection in which we will share some of the activities we focused on, what the children observed, as well as interests we may have explored.

Visit http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/topics/earlychildhood/early_learning_for_every_child_today.pdf to review the *ELECT* document.

The following outlines the program content for our Discovery Station programs and may vary based on the ages of the children and each individual group. Our Discovery Station Emergent Learning program follows the education requirements of the Ministry of Education and aligns with the Halton District School Board curriculum. The preschool program is 3 hours while the Toddler program is 2 ½ hours. Daily Explorations for each group are posted on the Discovery Station bulletin board at each classroom:

- Free choice of play; an opportunity to explore various learning centres throughout the room. Centres include; dramatic play, building & floor toys, free choice creative, playdough, puzzles & cognitive toys, easel activities, quiet book corner, science & special interest table.
- Small group learning discussions which follows the children's interests
- Washroom Routine and Snack
- Creative projects related to the areas of interest, sensory, cognitive and gross motor activities
- Large group activities that may include stories, music and movement
- Occasionally we have special visitors that visit our classroom (e.g. Humane Society)

Extended Day Program

This program will still incorporate all the components of our regular 3 hour Discovery Station program and offers 4 hours of care. This additional time gives the children more opportunity to explore areas of interest, allows them to continue on with projects and work on social development. The children will receive a nutritious snack as well as a catered lunch.

Walks

Our Discovery Station program includes walks as part of the program. These are conducted throughout the year, and depend upon how quickly the group settles into routines etc. Educators ensure that safety is the first priority. Teachers are required to complete a walk checklist to make sure all policies and procedures are covered before leaving. The procedure of the walk is discussed with the children and they are assigned a walking rope handle to hold on to.

Walks typically happen with our preschool groups only; however, again depending on the children, our toddler groups might go on a short walk in the spring. We try to let parents know ahead of time if the groups are going out, but sometimes the weather is wonderful and we may want to venture outside. If we are planning a nature walk, it will be posted on our bulletin board, but will be dependent on the weather. We take the children to local areas only. This could be to a grassy area near the centre, or to a park close by. If the children walk to a park, it would be to have snack or play games. Children are not allowed to use any of the park equipment or play structures. Walks are a great way to introduce your child to different signs of the seasons, sounds and a chance to see what is happening in the neighbourhood. We keep the walks short and simple. Please ask your child's teacher to explain where they might be taking the group, or clarify any other questions you may have.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable clothing. Each child should have an extra set of clothing including underwear, socks, T-shirt, pants and an indoor pair of shoes (no slippers or flip-flops please). Please provide a backpack on a daily basis with your child's initials to store the extra clothing (e.g. "JT"). All creative supplies used in program are non-toxic, safe and washable, but not all stains wash out!

Diapers

It is not anticipated that all children will be toilet trained, so if necessary please provide spare diapers and wipes for your child. In all of our programs, both Toddler and Preschool, there is a washroom routine. However, if your child needs their diaper changed outside of this routine it will be attended to. If your child is toilet training, please discuss any special requests with the staff. We'll be happy to help!

Snack/Lunch

We provide a nutritious snack along with filtered water in all of our programs. Children's special dietary needs and allergies are posted both in the food preparation area and in the classroom. Monthly menus are posted on the Discovery Station bulletin board. We attempt to provide a nut free environment. If a parent/caregiver of a child who has a special diet wishes to bring in their own food, they may. Any food items that are provided by a parent/caregiver must be labeled with the child's name and the ingredients. A nutritious lunch will be provided by a catering company along with milk in our extended day program. All of our snacks and lunches meet the recommendations set out in Canada's Food Guide.

Special Days

We celebrate your child's birthday in our program. Due to the increased number of allergies we have decided to avoid any edible birthday treats in your child's class. Please enjoy the birthday treats at home! Thank you for your continued co-operation.

Toys

Although your child may wish to bring favourite toys from home, we strongly encourage you to leave personal items at home. It is often difficult for children to share special toys and to ensure that the toy is not misplaced. We have a "Show and Share" day throughout the year where your child is allowed to bring something from home and show it during circle.

Visits

During the school year we invite the parents to join their child's program. This is a great opportunity to spend a morning with your child and learn more about their interests and routines in the class. A sign up schedule will be posted outside your child's classroom. Please note we strongly encourage you to make alternate arrangements for siblings. Detailed information will be provided in January.

"Some things about Me"

The teaching teams will provide some feedback on each child and it will be distributed in the spring in the Discovery Station classes. Each group will create a different format to give feedback on your child in areas of the classroom and growth that was observed over the year; this will be developed based on the *ELECT* document.

YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Sanitary Procedures

Appropriate procedures are followed with regard to sanitary procedures, as required by the CCEYA and the Public Health Department.

Toys - Toys will be washed and disinfected on a weekly basis, or more often, depending on use.

Washroom Routine - Each child will wash his or her hands before snack and after toileting. Liquid soap and paper towels are available for hand-washing.

Furnishings - The washroom is tidied and disinfected, the floor is damp-mopped, and the carpet is vacuumed after each program.

Health Care Policies

Parents are required to keep their child at home if they display any of the following:

- ❖ Fever (anything over 38.5° C)
- ❖ Respiratory symptoms
- ❖ Diarrhea/vomiting
- ❖ Skin problems(undiagnosed)
- ❖ Eye/Nose drainage- thick mucus or pus draining from an eye or nose
- ❖ Sore throat
- ❖ Cough (persistent)
- ❖ Itching (persistent of body or scalp)
- ❖ Head lice– *a medical note is required stating your child is clear of lice and/or nits before he or she can return to program*

For your information, a list of communicable diseases and incubation and isolation periods are posted on the Discovery Station bulletin board. OPCC, at the discretion of the Supervisor, Manager or Executive Director, may require a Doctor's note for a child to return to the program. The information being collected is for the sole use of OPCC (including staff and representatives). Personal information will not be shared or sold to any third parties, without your consent, except in instances where we are required to do so in accordance with health and safety requirements or other legal obligations.

Exemptions from immunization – if your child is exempt from immunization, then a Statement of Conscience form or Religious Belief form must be completed by a “commissioner for taking affidavits” (i.e. must be notarized). A Statement of Medical Exemption form for medical exemption to immunization must be completed by a doctor.

In the event that your child becomes sick during a program, the parents are called first and then, if the parents cannot be reached, we call the emergency contact to pick up your child. Appropriate care is provided until the parents or emergency contact arrives. If your child is ill or will be absent from the program, please inform the teacher at departure time on the previous day or contact our office at 905-849-6366. A first-aid kit is kept in the classroom and accessible to all staff. Parents will be required to sign off on the accident/illness form when need be, and a copy will be provided. All program staff is required to have a valid certificate in standard First Aid, including infant and child CPR.

Allergies and Administration of Medication

The Centre will not administer any medication (prescription or non-prescription ie; Tempra etc.), except in the event a child requires emergency medication in response to an allergic or life threatening condition. If your child has an epinephrine auto injector or a rescue reliever inhaler, **please contact the Supervisor/Manager to complete the required forms. This package must be completed before your child can start in the program.** If there are any changes in a child's medical condition, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the Supervisor immediately. OPCC, at the discretion of the Executive Director, may refuse to undertake responsibility for administering medications or procedures, which staff does not have the expertise to administer.

Individual Plans

OPCC will create individualized plans for children with special needs and/or medical plans and/or anaphylaxis plans. All Educators and visitors are to review, understand and adhere to children's individualized plans. These will be signed off annually and/or when plan is modified. The Supervisor will review individual plans with staff, students and volunteers. If you have any questions, please let us know.

CHILD GUIDANCE

It is the purpose of OPCC and this program to provide a warm, caring environment in which each child feels safe and secure. Consistent limits for behaviour have been set, appropriate to the developmental level of the child and deal with health and safety, appropriate use of the equipment and the rights of each individual. We believe that the child responds best to positive direction, using encouraging language and tone of voice. The child learns respect for others by being given respect for himself/herself. Our child guidance policies reflect this philosophy. Methods used include:

- Redirection – guiding a child into an acceptable option when engaged in an unacceptable activity
- Natural and Logical Consequences
- Limit Setting – boundaries are developed by the teachers for the children as a group or for individual children, according to each situation
- Modeling
- Providing choices
- Anticipating conflict – planning and preparation of the environment
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement

If a difficult situation arises with the child, the teacher may discuss appropriate solutions in co-operation with the parent. Any disciplinary practice based on negative control technique is not allowed. The provision of Prohibited Practices forbids corporal punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. These practices are never permitted in our Centre.

All employees, program staff, students and volunteers are required to ensure that the following list of prohibited practices are not committed:

- corporal punishment of the child; including but not limited to any harsh discipline of any kind; Spanking, hitting, slapping or other abusive physical control

- physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will and any type of behaviour that is sexually abusive

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to take an active role in our Discovery Station program and regularly discuss what their child is experiencing with our program. As stated in our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/caregivers and educators, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their child. Our educators are available to engage parents in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents are taken seriously by OPCC 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. When necessary, a meeting will be arranged in a timely manner that is suitable to all, in order to have an open discussion between the parents, educators and Supervisor/Manager. This meeting will help support communication and positive relationships.

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 will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents within 24 hours. 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. Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents, children, educators, 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).

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party. If at any point a parent, educator or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Supervisor/Manager or the Executive Director. As well, if a parent is not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may also address the issue/concern with the Executive Director or OPCC's Board of Directors. Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act.*, can 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, etc.) where appropriate.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY

OPCC takes pride in the fact that safety is a priority in our Discovery Station program and all of our programs. OPCC has emergency management policies and procedures in place if an emergency arises while children are in our care. If necessary, we will evacuate the children to our safe place and once children are settled safely, parents/caregivers will be notified.

Our safe place for our NSR-Main site is our NSR-Satellite location, at 481 North Service Rd W., #25.

Note: all directions given by emergency services personnel will be followed under all circumstances, including directions to evacuate to locations different than those listed above.

As soon as possible, OPCC must notify parents of the emergency situation and when the all-clear has been given. Where emergencies have occurred that did not require evacuation of the child care centre, OPCC must provide a notice of the incident to parents.

If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, OPCC will provide parents with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.

If staff, parents and/or children have experienced distress from a crisis situation that occurred at OPCC, then the Executive Director/Manager will support and work with the appropriate agencies to assist in the recovery process to ensure help is given to those that require it.

Please contact the Supervisor/Manager if you have any questions at any time.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

Incident/Accident Forms

OPCC is required to complete an Incident/Accident Form in the event of an injury. These forms are shared with the parents and must be signed by the parent at pick-up and given a copy. The original forms are then kept in the child's file.

Serious Occurrence

A severe situation or injury warrants immediate attention and action. It is the responsibility of the Teacher to report immediately any occurrence, or suspected occurrence, to the Supervisor/Manager and/or the Executive Director. A preliminary report will be completed by the Supervisor/Manager/Executive Director, and the occurrence will be reported to the Ministry of Education-Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch. Part of our serious occurrence procedure is to post the Serious Occurrence Notification form at the site of the incident so parents can have access to this information. This will be posted in a visible area for 10 days.

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/caregiver 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*.

This booklet has been designed to provide you with detailed information regarding our Discovery Station program. If you have any questions or concerns, please give us a call at 905 849-6366.