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Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc.

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WELLINGTON
Early Learning Centre

Parent Handbook

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Table of Contents

Program Statement..... 2-5

General Philosophy..... 6

Our Programs..... 7

P.D. Days/March Break/Winter Break/Summer Break..... 7

Enrolment.....7-8

Admission and Discharge..... 8

Consequences Policy.....8

Fee Schedule and Remittance..... 8

Financial assistance.....9

Fees, Late Fees & Other Additional Fees.....9

Tax receipts.....9

Parental Concern Policy.....10

Confidentiality.....10

Conduct11

Concerns about the suspected abuse of neglect of a child.....11

Escalation of issues or concern.....11

Inclusive of all.....12

Visits to the childcare.....12

Communication..... 13

The Family.....13

The Child.....14

The Educator.....14-15

The environment.....15-16

Nutrition.....16

The Community/Students & Volunteers.....16

School Boards.....16

The Supervisor.....17

The Board of Directors.....17-18

Prohibited Practices.....18

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Procedures.....19

Parking19

Children’s Health.....19

Medications and Medical Needs.....19-20

Sleep time.....20-23

Fundraising.....23

Field Trips as Enrichment Opportunities.....24

Extreme Weather & Emergency Evacuation.....24

Centre Closures24

Mandatory Reporting.....25

Serious occurrence reporting.....25

Program Development.....25

Hours of Operation.....26

Contact/Mailing Information.....27



Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc.

Parent Handbook

Program Statement

Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc., believes in embracing and imbedding the practices, principles and policies provided from documents such as *“Early Learning For Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings”*. (ELECT- 2007); *“Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children”* (2013) and *“How Does Learning Happen? Pedagogy for the Early Years”*. (2014).

These documents are available on the Ministry of Education website at www.ontario.ca/edu along with the *Child Care Early Years Act (CCEYA)* which provides regulations for maintaining a license for childcare.

Our Program Statement is designed around the four foundations set out in *“How Does Learning Happen”*, that are important for children to grow and flourish.

All employees, student and volunteers shall review and sign off on the program statement prior to interacting with children, annually, and after any modifications.

At Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc., we believe that each child is curious, competent, capable, and rich in potential and that it is as important to teach children how to learn, as it is to teach specific skills and abilities. The following declarations reflect our expectations for current practices of early childhood education.

To promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children:

By building connections with the children that promote the well-being of the children:

- engaging with children at their eye level
- using a pleasant calm voice and simple positive language with eye contact
- providing warm responsive physical contact
- Offering genuine acknowledgement for their accomplishments and effort for what they have done well.

By implementing policies and procedures that guide health and safety practices:

- Educators are Registered Early Childhood Educators (R.E.C.E.) accredited by the College of Early Childhood Education or equivalent qualification as set out by the CCEYA 2014
- All Staff will be trained in health and safety protocols. Hold fire drills on a monthly basis. Trained in Standard First Aid/CPR and the use of epi-pens



By implementing policies and procedures that guide the nutritional practices:

- Provide a menu that is overseen by a dietitian from Public Health ensuring it meets the Canada's food guide for portions and balance of nutrition
- At least 2 staff hold a certificate of training in Food Handling practices
- Using good hygiene habits, such as all staff and children are required to wash their hands upon entering the room, after toileting and before eating.

To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff:

By using resources available that assists us to provide responsive and up to date information to plan and make decisions regarding the changing needs of children, their families and the educators.

- Workshops; professional Development;
- Policy implementation; community partners; ASQ3; transition to school;
- Written documents such as "How does Learning Happen", CCEYA 2014," Early Learning for Every Child Today"
- We have an open door policy with Parents/ Parent communication
- Foster children's positive self-esteem

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

By stating simple and clear expectations, taking time to engage children in the process of resolving problems and conflicts, encouraging children to listen to others and share ideas

- Staff will model the use of positive language and behaviours
- Encourage self-regulation through providing an environment where a child feels safe and supported.
- Teach the children to recognize their emotions and to discover ways in which to deal with the emotion affectively and calmly.

To foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry:

By providing a program where the educators are co-learners recognizing the value of the ideas and contributions that the children bring to the programs that enhance children's exploration, play and enquiry.

- Educators provide developmentally and age appropriate learning activities for the children to explore and manipulate.
- Educators provide a combination of open ended play based materials along with teacher facilitated practices.



To provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences:

By engaging children in active, creative and meaningful exploration and inquiry where staff will be co-learners with the children.

- Educators engage in open ended conversation with the children and asking open-ended thought-provoking questions
- Educators will develop an understanding of each child's interests through observation, reflection and documentation.
- Provide materials and activities to support those interests

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

By Providing space and opportunities that are rich in potential for discovery, creativity, and learning.

- Educators actively engaged with the children and take advantage of spontaneous learning moments during the day.
- Provide space and opportunities that are rich in potential for discovery, creativity, and learning
- Encourage children to be respectful of the ideas of others

To 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:

By providing time for children to engage in indoor and outdoor active play as well as rest and quiet times in the daily schedule.

- Children will spend a minimum of 2 hours per day outside engaging in active play, in all-weather except extreme. At times, we may shorten this time due to weather considerations, but we will make every effort to bring the children outside every day.
- Provide cots and sheets for quiet rest time
- During quiet time, provide alternate quiet activities for those children who are not ready to sleep
- Encourage children to bring articles from home to help transition to quiet time (favourite book, snuggly, music, etc.)
- Provide a space for children to be alone, within the safety of the program, or rest if they are tired.



To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children:

By providing parents with regular communication in a variety of formats

- Educators will keep communication open via short discussions, notes, phone calls and emails.
- Sharing children's experiences with parents,
- Program documentation is available in all rooms for parents to view
- Parents are encouraged to get involved by joining our Board of Directors and Fundraising Projects.

To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff:

By working cooperatively with various agencies such as the County of Wellington and Taylor Evan's Public School, Community colleges and Universities to provide support to our children, families and staff.

- Community partners are invited to support the educator's and children in the programs
- Yearly observation that supports the programs through Operating Criteria
- Open communication for shared space, transition to school meetings and a seat on the Parent advisory Council
- Support co-op students from local universities and colleges by offering supervised placements and mentorship opportunities

To support staff, or others who interact with the children at a child care centre premises in relation to continuous professional learning:

By encouraging continuous learning for the educators through a variety of activities and opportunities

- Monthly staff meetings
- Regular scheduled programming time – individual and team
- Supported in participation of professional development offered in the community

To document and review the impact of the goals and strategies set out in the program statement on the children and their families:

The Program Statement will help inform Wellington Early Learning Centres performance review process. (Staff reviews and Parent surveys)

Information regarding the review of implementation of the program statement will be kept in a binder containing observations, plans and documentation to support understanding.



Parent Handbook

Thank you for taking the time to read this Parent Handbook. It contains important information regarding your child's care. Feel free to contact the Supervisor if you have any additional questions.

General Philosophy

At Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc., we believe that each child is a capable, competent being. Children learn through self-directed play and exploration. The educators provide guidance and direction through nurturing authentic, caring relationships and supporting meaningful participation.

We provide an environment that builds resilience, self-esteem and problem solving skills. We work to enhance children's natural sense of wonder, encourage them to be observant, and provide occasion for discovering answers to their many questions. This provides each child with the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential.

We believe children develop to their optimum if their uniqueness is respected. A child who feels good about him/herself is a happy child. To help create self-approval in a child, the child's feelings, whatever they may be, are recognized and accepted without criticism. At the same time, we will promote positive problem solving that develops empathy and an understanding of how to function within a group setting.

We provide learning environments designed to provide the child with the materials he or she needs to promote independent thinking, enhance social skills and build upon prior knowledge. As a child gains experiences, he or she adapts this new knowledge in a way that is relevant to his or her own developmental stage.

We believe that through the encouragement of Early Childhood Educators and peers, a child will be able to safely explore as far as his or her curiosity leads. Through the many activities offered in the Centre, a child will develop physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually with the guidance of qualified professionals.

We provide Early childhood educators, who observe, assess, and document what is seen as the learning process, skill achievement and learning outcomes for the children.

We believe that by paying close attention to how concepts are learned by children individually and as a group, we can continuously refine the educational process, and at the same time share it with you, the families.



Our Programs

WELC has facilities to accommodate 110 children between the ages of 18 months to 12 years. We have accommodations for 15 Toddler and 16 Preschool full day spaces. We also offer before and after school programs with accommodations for 26 (JK/SK) 53 School age (6 to 12 years old).

Toddler and Preschool (18 months to 5 years of age)

Our Toddler and Preschool programs focus on social skills through play that challenges your child to learn. These Full Day Programs operate year round with the exception of statutory holidays.

Kindergarten: Before and After School Care (Children in JK/SK)

Our kindergarten BASP program complements your child's kindergarten experience.

School Age: Before and After School Care (Children in Grades 1-6)

Our School Age BASP program provides an opportunity for your child to socialize in an environment conducive to fun and learning.

P.D. Days/March Break/Christmas Break/Summer Break

Both our Kindergarten and School Age Programs operate as full day care during scheduled school closures (i.e., P.D. Days, March Break, etc.). We recommend early registration for all of our programs, as space will be limited. Registration is based on a first come, first serve basis, with children currently enrolled having first priority over the community as a whole. Sign-up sheets will be provided in your child's program. These full day care programs which are not fully enrolled may be cancelled.

In addition, depending on when Christmas and Boxing Day fall each year, the Centre may close for 1-2 additional days over the holiday break when and if enrolment is expected to be low. Parents will not be charged for these days.

Enrolment

We encourage all families who are interested in enrolling their child in one of our programs to call for an appointment to tour the Centre. During the tour we will discuss your childcare needs, the Centre's policies and the fees. Parents should inform the Supervisor if any special assistance is required. We are able to access many resources through the Canadian Mental Health Association, Immigration Services, Kids Ability, etc. Before your tour, we recommend



that you visit the government web site: www.ontarion.ca/childcare “**Finding the Right Childcare For Your Family**”. Once your child is enrolled into our program, we will set up some initial visits to familiarize your child with the Centre.

It is important for the safety of your child to keep all your information up to date and ensure that we have proper contact numbers in case of emergency. We will request that you review this information annually.

Admission and Discharge

A non-refundable \$40.00 **registration fee** is required when your child’s space allocation is confirmed. Upon enrollment, a non-refundable/non-interest bearing **deposit** of \$200.00 is required. This deposit will be credited to your account when proper written notice of program withdrawal is submitted.

Withdrawal from the program or requests for a permanent change in schedule requires two weeks written notice submitted to the supervisor.

Consequences Policy

Aggressive behaviour, towards children or staff, will not be tolerated. If children are behaving aggressively, or in a manner that is jeopardizing the safety or wellbeing of others it will be addressed according to our behaviour management policy. We will make every effort to work with the families to address and correct the behaviour, however, WELC reserves the right to terminate care should the aggressive or inappropriate behaviour continue. WELC also reserves the right to terminate care if we deem that parents/guardians/care givers are behaving aggressively or inappropriately, towards the staff at WELC.

Fee Schedule and Remittance

Our programs are budgeted on a cost recovery, non-profit basis. Fees are invoiced at the end of the month for the following month and are due to be paid by the 22nd of the month. Fees can be paid by cheque, e-transfer or pre-authorized payment. Cheques should be made out to Wellington Early Learning Centre and e-transfers can be sent welcsupervisor@gmail.com. A late fee of \$25 will apply to any fees not paid by the 22nd. NSF and bank fees will apply to any preauthorized payments or cheques that do not clear.

Payment is required for all scheduled care regardless of days missed due to illness, vacation, statutory holidays, inclement weather or changes in parent work schedules. Delinquent non-paid fees will result in a request for withdrawal from the Centre. Withdrawal from the program or requests for a permanent change in schedule requires two weeks written notice submitted to the supervisor. If you need to make temporary changes to your child’s schedule or require additional care please see the Supervisor.



PD days are filled on a first come first serve basis and a sign-up sheet will be posted in your child's class. March Break and Summer Care program booking starts in February and spaces fill up quickly. These programs are invoiced separately and require two weeks written notice for cancellation to avoid being charged.

Financial assistance with fees is available through the Wellington County Children's Early Years Department. To determine if you are eligible you must meet with a Child Care Subsidy worker. WELC receives a copy of the subsidy document confirming eligibility once this process is complete.

Parents are responsible for following all the rules and regulations of Wellington County Children's Early Years Department regarding subsidy or the space will be forfeited. Parents are required to review their subsidy record to ensure that it is kept up to date.

Late Fees & Other Additional Fees

There will be a late pick up charge of \$5.00 for every five minutes, or part thereof, after 6:00 pm when the Centre normally closes. Along with the late fee charge, parents will receive up to three warnings. The first warning will be verbal and the next two warnings will be written. A fourth lateness necessitates withdrawal of your child from the program.

A fee of up to \$15.00 may apply if your child becomes ill and must be isolated from the group for longer than one hour. We understand that parents need time to make arrangements at their place of work to leave on short notice and we believe that one hour is a reasonable amount of time for a parent to come pick up their child.

Tax receipts are issued by the end of February each year. WELC issues one receipt per family invoiced. Any additional or duplicate receipts will be subject to a \$25.00 administration fee. Please retain your monthly statements for additional income tax purposes.

Small additional fees may be requested from time to time to partially recover the added cost of a special event such as a field trip. Advance notice will be provided to parents.

The fee schedule will be reviewed periodically by the Board of Directors of WELC. All fees are subject to change. You will receive 30 days' notice of any fee changes.



Parental Concern Policy

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

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

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

If you have a concern regarding your child programming (ie. schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.) please address your child's program teachers. If the issue cannot be resolved, the supervisor will become involved.

If you have a concern regarding centre operations (ie. child care fees, wait lists, staffing, centre cleanliness, etc.) please address your concerns directly with the supervisor.

Confidentiality

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



Conduct

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

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

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

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidd/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 Supervisor.

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

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

Contacts: [insert information, e.g. agency/organization contacts, supervisor and/or individual who oversees the programs, ministries and local authorities, professional membership bodies]

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



Child Care Supervisor: Megan Ramsey 519-763-5540

College of Early Childhood Educators: 416-961-8558

County of Wellington Child Care Services: 519-837-3620 ext. 3800 for reception

Inclusive of all

We at Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc. believe that all children have a right to quality childcare. No child will be refused admission, where we can provide quality care that will meet the child and family's needs. We will not exclude any child due to culture, ethnicity, ability, fragile health, medical needs, or family background.

We will provide an intake interview and tour for all of our families and look at how we can meet the individual needs of their child and determine whether this is the best option for them. If we cannot meet their needs based on what we have to offer as a centre at that time we will provide support and information to the family in finding an alternate location. We will use all of the community supports at our disposal to support our families and provide opportunities for their children to be successful.

Visits to the childcare

It is a good idea to come for a visit before your child's first day of care. We recommend a few hours where you can spend some time with your child in the program and a second shorter visit where your child can stay by themselves in the program. This allows for you and your child to meet the child care staff, experience a day at the centre and see how the learning happens throughout the day. These visits can be tailored to the needs of each family through discussion with the Supervisor as some families may need more time and some may request less time to make the adjustment to childcare.

Feel free to stay with your child for the first day or part of the day, but whenever possible leave when you say you are going to, it is important for the child to see your confidence, this will help them build theirs. When you say goodbye don't be alarmed if you and your child cry. We will be happy to comfort your child and you can call to see how they settled in at any time. It is a good idea to have a goodbye ritual like waving at the window to help your child to let go, it may be difficult for you to leave but sometimes a child will become more upset if they sense that you are upset or unsure about what to do. You are welcome to bring a special blanket, sleep toy or other comforting item for your child. You might even send a family picture with your child. It is always difficult to leave your child in the care of others but please be assured that it will become less upsetting as everyone settles into a routine.



Communication

The teachers in the program will welcome each child and parent/caregiver upon arrival and departure; we encourage using this time for sharing brief messages about your child's day, weekend, etc. as it is important for each person to have an understanding of the child's well-being as we exchange care giver roles.

These can be busy times for everyone, if you would like to have a more in-depth conversation please call the centre to set up a meeting time.

Documentation in the form of photos and descriptions of events are posted in the centre along with written documentation of daily events, development and discoveries.

Printed and/or e-mailed newsletters, program updates, general information is also used to keep families

The Family

As parents you are always welcome. We also invite you to share any special talents, occupation, pets, hobbies, or experience. The children can learn a lot from community visitors.

Parental input is important if parents and child care providers are to work together in the child's best interest, therefore we provide a parent survey each year which is instrumental in setting goals and objectives to ensure our programs meet your family needs. This information also guides us in planning parent meetings and family social events. Feel free to make appointments with your child's teacher or the supervisor to discuss any areas of concern or interest.

Parents are also encouraged to become active members of committees, formed as needed, or become part of the Board of Directors for Wellington Early Learning Centres. Interested Parents may contact the Supervisor at any time.

We have access to multiple community resources can assist in connecting families and offer a small library of books about child development and parenting challenges. We value and respect privacy in these matters therefore we have postings on the information boards as well as the teachers to help get the information to families.



The Child

We view the child as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

The child is not only the student learning they are also the teacher. Through their play we see how they view their world, what experiences they have had and how they respond to those experiences.

These teachings allow us to incorporate Holistic approaches; to encompass a broad range of goals and aspirations for children's learning that extends well beyond academic learning into areas of social and emotional wellbeing.

The children's actions guide what interest centres and activities will be presented in the classroom.

The Educator

The educators are play partners. They follow the lead of the children in play and guide the play through questions to the children that encourage the children to think about what will happen if ...; they are also observing and listening to the children to determine understanding and skill set, and they use reflective practice to determine the needs and interests to expand the learning opportunities in the program.

By understanding the uniqueness of their group of children; and each child within that group, the teacher's guide the children using a Reggio inspired, play-based curriculum. Reading, writing, arithmetic and colours can easily be introduced to, and used by, the children during all parts of their day however, providing and learning the skills for social acceptance is not as easily put into place. The teachers encourage these skills through modeling behaviours such as asking to join in a group at play, empathizing when a child is finding it difficult to wait for a turn and providing safe outlets for anger when necessary. Simultaneously these amazing Educators are also encouraging independence in the children by allowing the children to try and try again then celebrating with your child as he or she gains success.

All of these skills are essential to each child becoming a productive, contributing member of our communities as they grow up and become the leaders of our society. (WELC, AGM, Supervisors report 2014)



These teachers are made up of people that are dedicated to children's success in achieving academics, social acceptance and independence. Our Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE) and Educators have a variety of experiences; education and beliefs, which adds uniqueness to the culture and environment at WELC.

Our RECE's are members of the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE), although mandated for RECE's; each educator is required to know and abide by the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as set out by the CECE and to continue their professional learning throughout their careers.

Each staff, student, and volunteer is oriented in policies and procedures of WELC and is required to provide a police record check with a background check under the vulnerable sector act as well as proof of immunization and current First Aid with Infant and Child CPR. Further, each new staff participates in a minimum of eight hours of job shadowing prior to their first day as a team teacher.

The environment

Our program rooms are set up to allow for exploration of the materials. The educators provide materials that they have determined will be of interest and developmentally appropriate for individuals or groups of children. The children have input as to what is needed or wanted in the program through direct request, their interests and ability as well as through shared experiences.

We offer a minimum of two hours of **outdoor play time**, divided between mornings and afternoons. The outdoor area offers more opportunity for large motor play such as trikes, climbing, a large field to run in and a short path of trees to explore.

We incorporate a small garden center in a planter box during the spring to fall months and use the hills in the school yard for snow activities in the winter.

Programming objectives and activities are incorporated into outdoor play, at any time the outdoor environment can also be seen as an alternate classroom.

We use a variety of methods to ensure we are meeting each child's level of **development**. This includes photos and recordings for observation, Environmental rating scales and developmental rating scales.

Every May parents in the toddler and preschool program will be given a progress report that will inform you of your child's progress within our programs. You will also have the opportunity to meet with the teachers at that time to discuss the report and your child's progress.

As teachers plan for their programs you may be asked to provide information about your family or pictures and items of interest from home. We encourage you to share this information as it helps your child to feel included, important and respected by their peers.



The program also incorporates up to two (2) hours of **rest/sleep time** to allow the children to re-charge for the afternoon program. There is an expectation for the children to rest for the first half hour allowing time for their bodies to relax or fall asleep. For those children who do not fall asleep during this time we can offer quiet activities. These activities usually start with looking at books or activities' that can be accomplished while on their bed, after the first hour the children can continue with quiet activities at the tables.

We promote partnership, leadership, and empathy along with family values in our programs through merging our older student programs and younger student programs with activities such as reading buddies, inviting programs to participate in car wash and fun fair; we also provide a Helping Hearts (angel tree) program and Christmas concert.

Nutrition

Our meals and snacks are catered and provided by Wholesome Kids. Menus are posted each month for your review. The menu offers a morning snack, full meal lunch and an afternoon snack.

Our **snack** routines can vary from program to program such as eating in a group setting to free flow of children between snack and activities. Our lunch program encourages everyone to sit together at tables in the "family style". We provide the food options and the children decide how much to eat. Everyone is encouraged to try new or all foods to promote developing a sense of variety in nutritional intake.

The Community/Students & Volunteers

Students and volunteers are an integral part of the Wellington Early Learning Centre. Students come from a variety of backgrounds including high school co-op programs, college placements and university practicums, while volunteers may include non-credit students, parents, and other community members wishing to contribute to the Centre. Students and volunteers work under the direction and guidance of the staff, bringing new ideas and resources into the centre and providing valuable professional growth for staff, who develop supervisory and evaluation skills.

To ensure that the safety and security of all children at the Centre, the following policies will be observed with respect to the placement and participation of volunteers and students at the Centre:

- **No child will be supervised by a person who is under 18 years of age.**
- **Only paid employees may have direct unsupervised access to children.**
- **Volunteers and students will not be counted in the staffing ratio.**
- **Criminal Reference checks with vulnerable sector checks**

(From: WELC Policy # 8.6.9)



School Boards

WELC maintains a close professional relationship with the principal, vice principal and teachers of our host school, Taylor Evans PS, ensuring communication and practice align with Upper Grand District School Board policies and procedures. Our connection through shared space and families for our before and after school programs and holding a seat on the Parent Advisory Committee assist in keeping up-to-date and involved with school/community interaction.

The Supervisor

The supervisor is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of educators. Through program observation and meetings with the educators as individuals, as teams and collectively, the supervisor can determine the professional development needs and focus for training events for the programs and educators.

Other opportunities for determining professional learning are through individual, and program goal setting with the ISS team as well as program assessment and mandates of Operating Criteria, Public Health, Ministry of Labour, Ontario Safety Board and Ministry of Education licensing visits.

Various types of professional development can be offered through the supervisor in the form of articles, attendance at events or community professional brought in to facilitate workshops.

The Supervisor of the program also needs to set the example by being involved in the child care community. This includes participation in regular communication meetings and networking opportunities, as well as providing training to staff and the general community if appropriate.

The supervisor is also responsible day to day operations regarding Human Resources, Health and Safety, Financial, Facilities, Family and Community Relations, and Governance. Some aspects of these responsibilities will be shared with an Assistant Supervisor when available.

The Board of Directors

WELC is governed by a board of directors made up of **parents and community volunteers**. The Board works as a team with the Centre's Supervisor to effectively carry out the business of running the Centre.

Working in conjunction of the Supervisor the Board's main roles are the following:

1. Setting goals and policies
2. Strategic Planning and evaluation
3. Financial Management
4. Employee relations



5. Community relations
6. Fundraising

Positions on the BOD are, President of the Board, vice or Past President of the Board, Secretary, Treasurer and Directors

Parents are encouraged to become active members of the Board of Directors. The Board is responsible for the overall governance of the organization. By joining the Board, you will have a voice in the management of the Centre. **Board meetings** are held monthly and last approximately 1-2 hours. As a not-for-profit organization we must have no less than six members, or the Centre is legally required to cease operations. If you or someone you know would like to become a board member please contact the Supervisor or send an e-mail to welcboard@gmail.com

Prohibited Practices

As set out in the Child Care and Early Years act 2014 section 48 Prohibited practices

THE FOLLOWING FORMS OF DISCIPLINE SHALL NOT BE USED:

- Corporal punishment, physical punishment or other forms of aggressive contact
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- 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
- 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
- Deprivation of children of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures



Safe Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Children must be accompanied to and from the Centre by a parent or other adult. It is important that you bring your child into their program room, making sure the teacher is aware that your child has arrived. If you have any special instructions or change in pick up time, please advise staff when you arrive with your child. Your child will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the application form unless you have personally discussed this arrangement with your child's teacher or the Supervisor, or a note is provided. In situations where there is a **custody order** in place we are required by law to follow the order as written. All new people in the childcare will be asked to produce photo identification when picking up a child. If a situation becomes of concern (a staff feels threatened or feels that a child may be in danger) the teacher will remove any children and themselves from the situation and call the police.

Parents who wish to have their school age children walk home on their own or be picked up by a person under 18 years of age, must sign a **waiver form**.

Parking

Parents can park in the visitor parking or staff parking areas of the school parking lot when space permits. During time of school arrival and departure, between 8:15 to 8:35 am and 2:50 to 3:10pm, entering the parking lot is not permitted for the safety of all children and families. It is recommended that families walk to the centre during these times as parking may not be available.

Children's Health

Illness is defined as having symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea; fever over 38°C or 101°F, unexplained rash or any contagious condition. At the time of your child's arrival at the Centre, or during the day, the staff may observe that a child is not well enough to attend the Centre. In such cases, the parent will be notified that the child must be picked up as soon as possible as children who are ill and might pass the illness on to others. It is a requirement for ill children to be removed from the program until they are no longer contagious, or 24 hours have passed symptom free. In the case of an outbreak, such as the flu, you will be notified, and the timeline



will double to 48 hours symptom free. We cannot accommodate requests for children to stay indoors when they have a cold or cough. Outdoor play is an important part of our program. If your child is too sick to go outside, he or she is too sick to be at the Centre.

All children must have an up-to-date immunization record on file and this is shared with the Public Health Unit. The Public Health Unit keeps a data base of this information for your child's safety. The parent or childcare Centre can be contacted if there is a concern or possibility of contracting a communicable disease.

If your child contracts any communicable disease, or your child has been hospitalized for at least 24 hours, WELC must be notified. This notification ensures that protocols are followed to prevent further spread of illnesses.

If your child will not attend the centre on a particular day, please call the centre as soon as possible and inform us if your child is ill and what their symptoms are, or if they are not ill and staying home for another reason.

All environmental and food allergies, food restrictions or dietary preferences, must be documented in the appropriate registration and medical forms. We have a strict policy that requires all staff to follow the posted "allergy" information when providing food or program items.

Due to allergies and protocols any food coming into the centre must be documented with the supervisor or child's teacher and labeled with the child's name to remain at the centre.

It is important that parents do not send in food items with their child. We serve a well-rounded menu in our toddler and preschool programs which includes the snacks for our school age programs (JK-Gr. 7). When the school age programs are required to bring a lunch for full day care we expect that it will be a nutritious lunch and follow the same guidelines as in regular school day requests.

Medications and Medical Needs

Any child with serious allergies or a medical condition that requires special medication must complete an Emergency Medical Plan. We may also require a doctor's note or instructions to follow through with the administration of certain medication. Medications can only be administered if they are provided in the original prescription container, prescribed to your child, with clear instructions and a clear expiry date. All parents must complete a medication administration form each time medication is brought to the Centre. For your child's safety, please make sure the Supervisor is informed of all medical needs.

Sleep time

We offer up to two (2) hours of sleep/rest time for our toddler and preschool programs. The transition to sleep time begins following the lunch routine. Generally, between the hours of 12:00 and 2:00pm

- At time of enrolment parents will be asked about their child's sleep habits/routine



- Sleeping patterns or routines will be discussed at other times such as prior to moving to the next age group, noticeable change in child's sleep pattern, or when requested by the parent

Prior to sleep/rest:

- All children are encouraged to use the toilet either before or after lunch.

Cots:

- Children in toddler or preschool programs are provided a cot labeled with their name, covered with a sheet.
- The sheets are laundered weekly
- If a cot is shared, the cot is clearly labeled with the child's name and scheduled days, the sheet is removed, placed in a labeled bag and a sheet is put on for that specific child.
- Each cot is disinfected weekly or between uses of a shared cot.

Procedures for sleep/rest time:

- The room will have relaxing music or sound playing.
- Adults in the room will assist the child to calm through sitting near them, rubbing backs, or calming conversation.
- Once the children are settled and are able to rest their body for 30 minutes, they are given the opportunity to choose a book or bed box to play quietly with on their cot.
- Toys can be rotated every 20 minutes as needed.
- Strategies, in consultation with parents, will be put in place for children who do not rest or have difficulty settling.
- After 30 minutes to a maximum of one hour all children who are awake may participate in quiet activities set out in the room.
- Quiet time is over after 2 hours has passed.
- Any change to sleep patterns as noted through visual checks must be documented and shared with parents, staff, students, volunteers.
- Sharing information with parents can be done through daily notes, a personal conversation, (end of day, formal meeting) or by phone or email.
- Sharing information with staff, students' volunteers can be done through reading of the documented information (sleep check chart/daily journal) personal conversation. The person that documented the information is responsible for ensuring the information is relayed.

Visual checks

1. Employee's periodically perform a direct visual check of each sleeping child by being physically present beside the child while the child is sleeping and looking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours



2. Employees must ensure there is sufficient light in the sleeping area or room to conduct direct visual checks.
3. In the event of a concern please ensure the safety of all children, ask for assistance, and follow first aid protocols.
4. Employee indicates time of check(for child); any information (from rubric)
5. Employee must initial in the sleep check number box.

ie.

Check #	1	2
	AD	ED

Visual checks include: ensuring the child’s state of health has not changed (no irregular breathing patterns, change in skin colour, etc.); waking at an unusual time, waking in an unusual matter, coughing, restlessness or any unusual behaviours for that child.

Visual checks are made and documented for each child twice during the sleep/rest period. Once in the first hour; 30 min after children have fallen asleep and again once in the second hour 30 minutes before the scheduled waking time.

Documentation of the checks are completed on the **Sleep Checks chart** and kept in the room in a separate binder.

Sleep check charts must include:

- Date
- Name of each child: First name Last Initial
- Time that sleep time started
- Time of check 1
- Time of check 2
- Comments for changes/adjustments to sleep check schedule

Information regarding the children’s sleeping patterns or behaviours will be discussed with parents when there is a change or information has been documented.

Adjustments to the sleep supervision schedule will be made for a specific child or the group based on any irregular sleep patterns/behaviours or parent requests.

Some strategies to consider are:

- More frequent sleep checks
- Position of sleeping
- Propping the bed up in a safe manner
- Adding or eliminating a pillow

Weekly Sleep Checks (sample chart) (see sample page 23)



- ✓ Sleep checks are performed once in the first hour; 30 min after children have fallen asleep and again once in the second hour 30 minutes before the scheduled waking time.
- ✓ Please follow the rubric at the bottom of the page; indicate time, comments, and initials once the check is completed.

THE WEEK OF:

YEAR:

Day of the week	<u>Monday</u> Time that majority fall asleep:		<u>Tuesday</u> Time that majority fall asleep:		<u>Wednesday</u> Time that majority fall asleep:		<u>Thursday</u> Time that majority fall asleep:		<u>Friday</u> Time that majority fall asleep:	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Check # Initial:										
Time of Check										
Child Name First Name Last Initial										

Comments: (indicate specific plans for individuals or group)

✓ = Normal	W =Woke Up Upset	C =Coughing	R =Restless	BP =Bed Propped	NS =No Sleep	BM =Woke Up with BM
Comments		Irregular breathing	Unusual behaviour			

Fundraising

WELC is a charitable organization and fundraising is an essential source of income for our organization. Eighty percent of our yearly budget goes to wages, this helps ensure our teachers are qualified professionals who are paid a fair wage. Research shows that quality care requires



continuity of teachers and a variety of learning materials presented in an inviting manner. The cost to maintain and/or update these items can be quite high. Fundraising is intended to support the purchase of program materials to avoid these costs being incorporated into parent fees.

Successful fundraising requires help from parents to organize, participate in and promote our various campaigns. Donations are also accepted at all times. As a charitable organization we can provide a tax receipt for cash donations. “In-kind” donations or gently used items are also always welcome. (Paper for children’s drawings is always needed.)

Field Trips as Enrichment Opportunities

Field trips are an important part of the school age summer program planning at WELC. They are designed to meet the children’s developmental needs and to enhance the projects or activities that the children enjoy in their daily program. We inform parents in advance in order to allow parents sufficient time to sign a consent form for each activity. Parents will be given at least one week’s advance notice of any addition to programming.

The Child Care and Early Years Act is very specific in its requirements for child/ caregiver ratios, and full staff participation is required for field trips. Should circumstances arise which prevent a child’s participation in a field trip, it is the parent’s responsibility to arrange alternate care. For field trips that involve the entire group, it is impossible to provide **alternate care** and still ensure that all children on the field trip are properly supervised. Fees cannot be reimbursed under these circumstances.

Please discuss your concerns regarding field trips with your child’s teacher or the childcare supervisor to ensure that we work together for the best possible outcome.

Extreme Weather & Emergency Evacuation

Extreme weather has a number of forms: wind chill, low air quality, high winds, very hot temperatures or very cold temperatures. Each situation is unique and can interrupt our outdoor play time. During any time that there may be concern for the children’s safety in regards to playing outdoors, the staff may decide to reduce the outdoor time or adjust the activities offered.

At WELC we practice monthly fire drills and tornado drills as well as “lock down” procedures with the school. In the event of an **emergency** we are well prepared! If ever we should have to evacuate the building our emergency site is Gateway Public School during the school months. The summer alternate site is the West End Community Centre. In the event of an emergency evacuation we will notify parents as soon as possible by phone.



Centre Closures

In the event that a winter storm or any other serious situation causes Taylor Evans PS to close, WELC will also be closed. Parents are advised to listen to Guelph's local radio stations, **CJOY 1460 or Magic 106.1**, for weather closure announcements. Fees cannot be reimbursed under these circumstances.

Mandatory Reporting

There are a number of legislations that require mandatory reporting of events or situations that affect the programs and those working in the programs or accessing our services.

All employees are mandated to report "*Any allegations that a child may be in need of protection*" to **Family and Child Services and/or the police**. These concerns could be from something a child has told us, (disclosure) a parent has told us or that we have witnessed. Subsequently "any Wellington Early Learning Centre employee, board member, or volunteer found guilty of abuse" will be reported. This could also include any concerns for the safety of a child. (i.e. Car seats not used, impaired parent, other)

Serious occurrence reporting

We report to Ministry of Education – Childcare Licensing Division as well as the County of Wellington Children's Early Years Division. These reports fall into specific categories:

1. **The death of a child who receives child care at a home premises or child care centre;**
2. **Any abuse, neglect or allegations of abuse or neglect, of a child while receiving child care at a home premises or child care centre;**
3. **A life threatening injury to or a life threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a home premises or child care centre.**
4. **An incident where a child who is receiving care at a home premises or child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or**
5. **An unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a home child care premises or child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of children receiving child care at a home child care premises or child care centre.**



Program Development

All policies and methods of program delivery are evaluated on a regular basis to make sure that all information is accurate and relevant to current standards.

Please be aware that there are many policies that relate to safety, communication, and program development; these include the playground policy, parent access policies, Centre visitor policies and curriculum development, just to name a few. Space does not permit including all of these policies into this handbook; however, if you would like more information on any of the Centre's policies or any other aspect of your child's care, please do not hesitate to contact the Supervisor.

Hours of Operation

Toddler and Preschool Programs

Monday to Friday: 7:00am to 6:00pm

Before and after school Programs

7:00am to 8:25am/2:55pm to 6:00pm

School Age Full day/PA days

7:00am to 6:00pm

Late fees of \$5 for every 5 minutes, or part thereof, will be charged for each child being picked up after 6pm.

Holidays

Family Day

Victoria Day

Civic Holiday

Thanksgiving

Boxing Day

Good Friday

Canada Day

Labour Day

Christmas Day

News Year's Day

Please note that WELC will close at 12:00pm on Christmas Eve, or the last scheduled day before Christmas Eve.

Parents of children whose regular scheduled day falls on one of the above holidays will be charged for that day. Any other closure dates may be determined based on the viability of running the program.

All parents will be surveyed to determine need.

Contact/Mailing Information

WELLINGTON EARLY LEARNING CENTRES INC.

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Guelph, ON

N1K 1T1



28

Wellington Early Learning Centres Inc.

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