



Program Statement
and
Parent Handbook

2016-17

REVISED: April 2016

The Whitney Child Centre Program Statement

(approved by WCC Board of Directors: March 2016)

The mission of the Whitney Child Centre is to provide community child care based on learning through play, in a dynamic environment centred on the development of the whole child.

Introduction:

At the Whitney Child Centre we believe that children are competent, capable of complex thinking, and curious and rich in potential. We believe that children will thrive when we work together in our community, involving the family, the school and the environment. Our staff believe that every child deserves the opportunity to succeed, and our goal is to provide creative and responsive programs to allow children to develop and enhance their skills, to create and explore, to build on their strengths and abilities as individuals. Our program statement outlines our goals and the approaches we use to attain them.

We understand that families love their children and want the best for them. We see families as experts in their child, and our goal is to use that as a resource when setting program goals. Parents and extended family are the first and foremost influence on a child's learning, development and well-being; they bring diverse social, cultural and linguistic perspectives. Our goal is for families to feel they can be involved in a meaningful way. Parents are encouraged to provide information about their child and their family. Parents are given as much information about their child as possible, we value open communication and feedback. Parents are welcome to come into class to participate and provide expertise. Our Board of Directors is comprised of a maximum of 12 parents, and we conduct an annual parent survey to ask for our families' feedback and opinion.

Staff, Programming and Interactions:

The Centre supports staff by providing opportunities for continuous professional learning. Our staff are valued as professional educators. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective and resourceful. Staff are given opportunity for professional development and are also encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Staff work as a team; communication and feedback is considered vital to the success of our program. Our staff bring diverse interests, experiences and backgrounds. Staff are passionate about developing programming that is responsive, imaginative, creative and child focused. Staff are knowledgeable about child development and use the ELECT document to report and reflect on child development, they use 'How Does Learning Happen', 'Think Feel Act' and the ELECT document as resources to support their program goals in an emergent environment. Staff observe children to plan activities that reflect both children's interests and individual levels of development. Staff research ideas and material to instigate ideas and participation and to excite children to learn.

When planning the program staff ensure:

- That children belong and have a sense of being connected to others.
- That children feel valued and can build relationships with staff and other children.

- That our children can contribute in a positive way as an individual and as part of a group, in the community and the natural world.
- That children have positive well being.
- That children feel capable and confident with a good sense of self and strong self help and self regulation skills.

Our aim is for all children to be fully engaged in our programs. We believe that children should be able to explore their environments and engage with curiosity and exuberance. Our programs are play based, encouraging creative thinking, problem solving and innovation. Staff foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry using an emergent curriculum approach where children's natural curiosity, inquiry and sense of wonder is capitalized upon, and the children's interests shape and form the direction of the curriculum. Staff provide on-going activities to challenge children at their developmental levels and support children in learning concrete strategies to deal with emotions, both good and bad. Staff create areas where children can be quiet or active, exuberant or reflective. Staff's interests and ideas are reflected in programming provoking excitement, interest and ideas. Programming is flexible to allow for children's individual needs to be considered.

Staff support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents and staff. We believe expression and communication to be vital for success. Staff provide a language rich environment to support growing communication skills which form the foundation for literacy.

Our staff value and uphold the ELECT principles:

1. Positive experiences in early childhood set the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior, health and well being.
2. Partnerships with families and communities are essential.
3. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion is vital.
4. An intentional, planned program supports learning.
5. Play and inquiry are learning approaches that capitalize on children's natural curiosity and exuberance.
6. Knowledgeable, responsive and reflective educators are essential.

Program Statement Implementation:

- Staff are assigned time to meet as a team to discuss programming and to reflect and discuss observations.
- Staff meetings are used to discuss the program and problem solve issues that may occur, as well as to reflect on and highlight achievements.

- Staff set up the environment for the children ensuring a healthy and safe environment.
- Staff provide activities to foster exploration, play and inquiry.
- Staff observe children and record observations to ensure their programming reflects the children's developmental needs as well as including the children's interests and ideas.
- The program allows for child initiated activities and adults are able to extend and expand on the children's learning and experiences, modifying activities when necessary.
- Staff are encouraged to allow for flexibility in routines in order to meet children's needs.
- Staff will create and implement Individual Support Plans for any child identified with a special need.
- Our staff use their own talents, interests and experiences to enhance programming and planned experiences.
- Staff report on weekly programming through the use of our curriculum boards outside each classroom. The curriculum boards show activities provided, plus learning opportunities. Staff display photographs and samples of work.
- More information about the program, materials and activities is provided in the monthly newsletters.

Nutrition and Meal Times:

Our Centre aims to provide children with nutritious meals and snacks that promote healthy development. We are catered by Choice Children's Catering. The Centre posts information about our caterer and menus and other information regarding nutrition. We send home menus at the beginning of the school year, and when menus change in the Spring. Our goal at all meal and snack times is for children to develop age appropriate self help skills and to interact with other children and staff to develop social skills. We sit in small groups for lunch and snack and encourage children to enjoy and try new foods. Staff role model healthy eating habits. Staff use snack and meal times to encourage independence and self help skills, as well as to sit and engage with the children. Children are encouraged to serve themselves and to help clean up. The Centre reviews our menus and the caterer on a regular basis to ensure they are meeting the needs of our children and families. We ensure we visit the caterer's facility annually and that a nutritionist is reviewing the menus they provide, ensuring they meet and often exceed those requirements in Canada's Food Guide. Staff are always aware of the children's needs and adapt meal and snack times accordingly. A supply of fruit is always available if children are hungry and staff ensure every child has access to drinking water throughout the day. We ensure that any food restrictions or allergies are accommodated either by the caterer, the Centre or by the parent, always strictly adhering to our Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy.

Outside Play:

Children's health and well being is fostered both inside and outside. We have a wonderful playground that was renovated in 2009 allowing our children to connect with the natural world. Our full time children have a scheduled outside time morning and afternoon, which includes child directed and adult supported activities. Part time nursery school children usually meet outside and have an opportunity for outdoor play at the beginning of each session.

Full time children have one hour scheduled morning and afternoon. In addition the staff plan inside gross motor activities and the Centre has other specialists that come to the Centre to provide gross motor and exercise programs. These companies include: Monkeynastix and In The Mix. The Centre provides a varied array of gross motor equipment such as bikes, balls, hoops,

ride on toys, both inside and outside. Physical activity is encouraged and programmed for, and is considered an important part of the child's day. Neighbourhood walks allow for exploration of our community.

Nap Time:

Staff promote children's overall health and well being, by programming for both active and quiet times during the day. Children's individual needs for rest and play are considered. Our nap time follows lunch. The toddler and preschool children have 'cots' labeled with each child's name. We supply clean sheets weekly and ask parents to supply any other items their child might need such as a blanket or comfort toy. We understand that each child has different nap needs. All children rest, but preschool children that no longer sleep or rise early from nap time may return to their classroom for activities. We also provide options for early risers in the toddler room. Children are able to play quietly in the literacy corner or if ratios allow they can engage in activities in the gross motor area outside the classroom, or in our preschool rooms 106 or 107. Staff ensure the day is balanced to incorporate quiet periods in the child's active day. Staff may incorporate activities such as listening to stories, reading books or yoga and mindfulness.

Families, Community and Communication:

We see communication between families and our staff as a key to providing quality care. We aim to provide an inclusive, enriched child care environment which honours and respects all children's beliefs, culture, language and experiences acquired from their family and community. We encourage parents to share information regarding their child both verbally and in writing. We provide forms at registration time asking about each child's likes and dislikes and about their personality and any individual needs. We offer parent teacher interviews at any time throughout the school year either in person or over the phone. Toddler parents will receive a written daily report. Teachers in all age groups post and send home observations. We create 'learning panels' that are posted inside and outside the classroom. Our staff ensure they are available to give daily feedback. We post our daily and weekly activities outside the classroom on our curriculum boards. Each month we send home a newsletter with both general information and feedback about what happened in the classroom the month before, and about what the teachers have planned for the month ahead. At our Open House our goal is to have our parents attend with their children to view our environment and to have the opportunity to chat with staff, other parents and Board Members. We provide three social events where parents have the opportunity to meet other families and to connect within our community. We send home an Annual Parent Survey to solicit feedback from our families. We provide a link between child care and the school and attend the school information evenings and collaborate with the School Principal and staff to ensure a strong connection between us. We have a website with access to information about the Centre. In the Centre we provide Curriculum Boards, our Parent Board, the Board of Directors Board, the Playground Board and the Nutrition Board. In the lobby we provide general information on immunization, developmental tools and resources for families.

We aim to involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff. The Centre works with the Principal and the public school staff to create a positive working relationship between the child care and the school. We are able to access resources through various organizations including the City of Toronto, the TDSB, Public Health and Preschool Speech and Language to support families and childrens' needs. We welcome in-

put and support from other professionals regarding an individual child's needs. Please read the specialized service section in our Parent Handbook. Another way we use community partners is to enhance our program. For example a staff may invite the fire department, a doctor or a vet to come in and speak to the children. A parent may come in to read a story or play the guitar at circle time. Preschool children visit the public school to help with the transition to kindergarten and children are sometimes taken to watch age appropriate school events such as the Halloween Parade. In this way we build a sense of community.

Monitoring:

Annually in the spring, the Board of Directors and Supervisor will review the Program Statement making any revisions necessary. The Supervisor in conjunction with the Board of Directors will compile a written annual report which reviews the impact of our program statement on our children and their families. We will state whether we are meeting the goals set out in our Program Statement and as determined by the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014, Section 46 (3) (a – k), and set goals, or revise the Program Statement, as necessary.

In reviewing the Program statement, the Board and Supervisor will take into consideration:

- Feedback from staff.
- Feedback from families.
- The results of inspections by Public Health, the City of Toronto and the Ministry of Education.
- Feedback from the public school.

The Supervisor will evaluate the climate of the Centre, including scheduling, programming and the environment of each classroom.

The Supervisor will determine staff needs for further support or education to ensure continuous professional learning.

Staff will annually review the program statement and sign off on this review annually. Signatures will be kept on file for a minimum of three years

Supporting Documents:

Our Positive Behaviour Guidance Policy and Guidelines are part of our Program Statement. Our Parent Handbook provides families with full information about our program. Our policies are available on the Parent Board, and many can be found on our website. A copy of any policy may be obtained from the Supervisor.

Parent Information

Accessibility

Whitney Child Centre is dedicated to ensuring all programs and services are accessible to clients and their children in accordance with Ontario Regulation 429.07 Accessibility Standards for Customer Services.

The Whitney Child Centre is committed to improving access and opportunity for individuals with disabilities by identifying, removing and preventing barriers that may interfere with their ability to make full use of our facilities and service. The Centre is committed to developing policies, practices, and procedures that provide accessible quality services to its clients and their children. Services will be provided to clients with disabilities in a manner that promotes and respects dignity, independence, integration and equal opportunity.

If you require a specific accommodation or are experiencing difficulty accessing our services because of a disability, please contact the Supervisor so that arrangements can be made for an appropriate accommodation, to the extent it is possible.

We are happy to provide information pertaining to our services, policies and procedures, including emergency procedures, in an accessible format on request. We are committed to doing so in a timely manner.

We also have a feedback process available for persons with a disability to ensure we are servicing and meeting all of our clients needs in an accessible manner.

Please contact the Supervisor to let us know how we are doing.

Accessibility feedback forms are also available on our website and in our lobby.

For more information please read our Accessibility Policy which can be found at the back of this manual.

Centre Information

The Whitney Child Centre (“WCC” or “the Centre”) is incorporated as a not-for-profit organization and was established by a group of parents in response to a recognized need for nursery school and daycare services in our area. The WCC operates at Whitney Public School, renting space from the Toronto District School Board, and opened on September 6, 1983. The WCC offers quality full and part time programs for children 18 months to 12 years of age.

The Centre is licensed annually by the Ministry of Education. Our license is posted opposite room 107. The Centre also has a Purchase of Service Agreement with Toronto Children’s Services. Eligible families may apply for fee subsidies through the T.C.S., for more information on Toronto Children’s Services go to www.toronto.ca/children.

Families register for programs annually, and internal families are given priority to sign up for the following school year each December. Please ensure that you are familiar with our waitlist criteria. **All families must be aware that while we**

strive to ensure current children receive priority for admission, enrolment in a WCC program does not guarantee entrance into the next age group. Acceptance into the next age group is only possible if there is space. In particular, this can be an issue for admission into our school age program. School age children are generally enrolled from grade one to grade six, so spaces do not always become available each year. Kindergarten before and after care is offered through a third party agreement with the Toronto District School Board, grants are not received for this program so all costs must be recovered through parent fees.

Funding

The WCC is funded through a combination of parent fees, fundraising, and government subsidies in the form of wage grants and subsidized rent payments. These subsidies help us keep parent fees affordable, and any reduction would result in significant fee increases. As mentioned above, the before and after kinder program is 100% funded through parent fees. Fees for the before and after kinder program must fall within a range stated by the TDSB. The WCC offers this program through a third party agreement with the TDSB.

Staff

The staff at the WCC is a team of caring and dedicated professionals. The WCC team consists of a Supervisor, an Assistant Supervisor, teaching staff and support staff. With the exception of the support staff, all of our teaching staff are qualified RECE teachers, and many have additional qualifications. Staff have been trained in Emergent Curriculum practice and enroll in programs and workshops throughout the year to stay current in the field.

Our ECE teachers are registered with the College of Early Childhood Education. All WCC staff are trained in First Aid and CPR.

All staff hired are criminal reference checked. A check is performed every three years. Our staff board is in the lobby.

Most permanent staff have received food handler training.

Feedback

We work hard to communicate with parents through daily feedback, parent-teacher interviews and our monthly newsletters. Our teachers team teach, and use their talents to enhance our programming. Staff take the lead from the children and provide a child centred, imaginative program to ensure that each child in our care has a positive start to their school career. Staff use an Emergent Curriculum approach for planning a play based program, and use the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) framework to support programming, documentation and reporting.

Please be aware that all staff and Board Members sign confidentiality agreements and are not permitted to discuss other children or confidential issues with parents. For example, if another child injures your child, the staff is not permitted to disclose the name of the other child.

Accidents and Serious Occurrences

If a child has an accident, however small, the staff responsible will complete an accident report which is signed by the staff, supervisor and a parent. A copy of this report is given to the parent.

The Centre has a Serious Occurrence Policy which is attached to this handbook, and the Centre is required to complete and post a Serious Occurrence Form when a serious occurrence has happened. The form is to be posted within 24 hours of the occurrence. The form will be updated if additional actions or investigations are completed. The form will be posted for a minimum of ten business days. If the form is updated to include new information, the ten business days is calculated from the date of the change. This form will be posted in the place designated on the Parent Notice board in the Centre hallway, alongside our licensing information.

Programs Offered

The Centre offers the following programs:

- Toddler half day;
- Pre-school half day; half day and a hot lunch;
- Kindergarten (JK and SK) options may include before and after care, care on PD days and a hot lunch program;
- Full day child care to complement the toddler and pre-school programs; and
- School-age before and after care and care on PD days (6 to 12 years).

*** Full-time children have priority for the lunch program.**

Play Outside

Children who attend for six hours or more, are required to have outside play scheduled both morning and afternoon, as stated in the *Child Care and Early Years Act*. Your child must participate in the outside playtime unless a written doctor's note advises us otherwise. On adverse weather days the teachers plan indoor active periods. Please ensure your child has suitable clothing for changing weather conditions to ensure that he or she can comfortably participate in outside play. **We do not allow flip-flops on the climbing apparatus. Shoes and sandals must have a good grip and be suitable and safe for running and climbing. We suggest clothing in the warmer months that protects the head, arms and shoulders from the sun.**

Transitions

School Age: School age children (grades one and up) walk to and from class independently. Children are dismissed from the WCC at the start of school and are not accompanied by WCC staff to class. At 3:20 p.m. school age children walk to the WCC independently. The WCC staff does not monitor this transitional period. Your child must check in with us by 3:30 p.m. It is important that parents notify the WCC if a school age child is absent. If your child does not check in with

us by 3:30 p.m. we are required to search the building and playground. If we are unable to find your child by 4:00 p.m., or reach a parent to ascertain the child's whereabouts, we will proceed with our serious occurrence procedure, and report your child as missing to the Toronto Police Department. School age children are allowed to go to the bathroom unaccompanied by a staff member, but children use the buddy system and are sent with a peer from the school age program.

If you intend to sign your child up for any after four programs you must sign a release form. Your child will not be permitted to start the program until the release is on file.

Kindergarten: The WCC staff supervise all kindergarten transitions between the WCC and the Whitney Public School, and accompany kindergarten children to the bathroom.

Private Child Care Arrangements

We discourage parents from asking our staff to work for them in their home environment due to liability and conflict of interest issues, and therefore staff must not be contacted during WCC work hours regarding any private child care arrangements.

Staff are never permitted to sign children out of the Centre.

Please be aware that the WCC is not responsible for any staff that is independently employed by a WCC parent, and as stated previously, does not condone this relationship.

Hours of Operation

Our part-time options run from 8:45 a.m. to 11:20 a.m. and from 12:45 p.m. to 3:20 p.m. The full time program is offered from 7:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Children may also attend from 8:45 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.; this option does not include care on PD days. The morning and lunch program runs from 8.45 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. WCC is open from September to June, with the exception of statutory holidays, the Whitney Public School March Break and Winter Break. **Only children that are registered for full-time programs (7:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.) and school age children registered for P.D. days, are eligible to attend on P.D. days. The public school ends at 3.20 p.m. for children in grades one to six, and at 3.15 p.m. for kindergarten children.**

Statutory Holidays

The WCC is closed on the following holidays:

Labour Day

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

Boxing Day

New Year's Day

Family Day

Good Friday

Easter Monday
Victoria Day

Statutory holidays and P.D. days are factored into our fees.

Food

Children who receive lunch are provided with a catered meal with emphasis placed on nutritional balance and daily variety. Our caterer is Choice Children's Catering. Their website is www.choicechildrenscatering.com

For school age and kindergarten children cereal, milk and fruit are available before school. Wholesome snacks are served morning and afternoon for preschool and toddler children, and a hot lunch is served midday. School age and kindergarten children and full time daycare children also have an afternoon snack. Fruit is always available to children and the school age room has a bowl of fruit always available. Water is always available to children.

Weekly menus are posted on the board opposite room 108.

Children are encouraged to try everything that is served at each meal. If a child has allergies or is on a special diet, it is the responsibility of the parents to notify the Supervisor and staff so that special arrangements can be made concerning meals.

We are not permitted to serve any food that is home baked or prepared. Please do not send any food or edible treats into the Centre for the children. Any items distributed by parents for celebrations such as Halloween or Valentines Day must not contain edible items due to serious allergies in some of our children.

***** Please do not allow your child to eat in our hallways.** This protects any child who may have an allergy.

If you need to send in food for your child due to dietary restrictions, this must be arranged with the Supervisor and the request submitted in writing. Any food sent in to the Centre must be stored in a container labeled with your child's name. The food must be given to a staff member for appropriate storage. **We endeavour to provide a peanut/nut free environment. Nuts, peanuts, or nut and peanut products, are not permitted at the Centre.**

Allergies

Parents are responsible for informing the staff and the Supervisor of all allergies that their child may have and what reactions to expect. As outlined in our Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy the parent is responsible for training the staff and Supervisor to deal with their child's allergy. Although we cannot change the entire environment of the school because of allergies, every effort possible will be made to minimize contact with offending substances. Parents must read our Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy, which is attached to this Manual.

Parents of anaphylactic children must provide the WCC with two Epi-Pens and complete an anaphylactic alert form **before** the child commences any program. The anaphylactic alert form must be signed by the child's doctor or allergist. If a child has an allergy, either mild or severe, parents must fully explain the allergy, including symptoms and treatment, with the staff and Supervisor **prior** to the child's admission to the Centre. If your child has any dietary restrictions, please discuss these with the Supervisor. If you need to send in food with your child because of dietary restrictions it must be arranged in writing. (Please see Food section.)

Clothing

An extra set of clothing is to be kept at the Centre for each child. This should include: shirt, pants, underwear, socks and sweater/sweatshirt.

For those children who will be sleeping, please bring in a blanket and any other comfort item. Blankets and soft toys must be taken home to be laundered weekly. We discourage the use of soothers and bottles at sleep time.

We suggest that children leave a pair of shoes at the Centre in the winter and that children who remain at the Centre over lunch have extra mitts as well. While the staff will be diligent in looking after each child's personal property, the Board of Directors and the staff are not responsible for loss or damage to any property left at the Centre. Please leave sentimentally important clothes, toys and belongings at home.

Please ensure that your child is dressed safely for play. Long skirts, long scarves, dress shoes, open toed sandals, flip-flops, and crocs can cause accidents in group or gross motor play. **Running shoes** offer good support for the foot, good protection against toys and other people's feet, and provide secure climbing and running grip.

Toddlers: The following is a list of required items to be left at the Centre for each toddler:

- minimum of two complete changes of clothing;
- disposable diapers (if necessary);
- diaper cream (if necessary); the cream must be in the original container, labeled with your child's name;
- training pants (if being toilet trained): at least 4 on hand, particularly at first;
- blanket (daycare children);
- familiar toy, if required for daycare sleep time;
- suitable outdoor clothing for winter: boots, hat, mitts, **neck warmers** are safer than scarves, snow pants, jacket or snowsuit; and
- suitable outdoor clothing for summer: comfortable footwear, hat;

We discourage the use of bottles and soothers in the program, but we do want to make your child's experience as secure, reassuring and positive as possible. If

there are any routines or articles that will help your child through transition times (e.g. sleep, lunch, outside time), please let the staff know.

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS!

To make labeling easier, you may order labels from Mabel's Labels. The WCC receives a portion of all sales as part of our fundraising campaign.

Toilet Training

Parents are encouraged to discuss their child's toilet training with the staff so that a cooperative and consistent effort can be achieved. Please send in ample changes of clothing throughout this time.

In order to permit morning programming to start on time, parents must check and change their child's diaper if necessary upon arrival at the Centre. Children in training should be taken to the washroom by their parent or caregiver before the start of the program.

Arrival

Children in the part time morning programs must arrive at or after 8:45 a.m.

In all cases, parents and caregivers must ensure that their child is SIGNED IN with a staff member upon arrival at school. School age children must be signed in by an adult when they arrive for the morning program.

Departure

Our staff cannot allow a child to leave the WCC with an unauthorized person. We must be informed in advance if a person not listed in your child's file is to pick up your child. Please use the specially designated communication book in room 104, or the class log book, to record your authorizations for such pick-up arrangements. If an unauthorized person should arrive to pick up your child, they will be asked to wait until a parent or guardian can be reached by telephone. Under no circumstance will this person be allowed to leave with the child, until a parent or guardian has given permission.

No child shall be allowed to come to or to leave the Centre without an accompanying adult. All authorized persons must be 16 years of age or older. If the pick up person is under 18 years of age, we must receive a letter of authorization, which is dated and signed by the parent.

Children enrolled in part time morning programs **must** be picked up no later than 11:20 a.m. Children enrolled in part time school day programs **must** be picked up no later than 3:20 p.m. Children enrolled in the daycare program **must** be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m.

Most parents have a usual time for dropping off or picking up their children. If for some reason this time is to be earlier or later, parents are asked to advise the staff in advance.

Parents and caregivers must ensure their child is SIGNED OUT with a staff member; once the child is signed out they are the responsibility of the parent or caregiver.

Transportation

WCC staff will only escort kindergarten children to and from the Whitney Public School. The WCC does not provide any method of transportation or escort from the Centre to any other facility. We do not provide an escort to or from any form of vehicle, including a school bus, except in the case of a field trip from the Centre. The Centre does not have additional staff available to wait or meet buses. Taking a staff away from the program will reduce ratios, which is not permitted. WCC staff cannot escort children to after four programming or services.

As stated in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, WCC staff, including the Supervisor, are not permitted to transport WCC students in their personal vehicle. In the event of a child needing to be transported due to an accident, an ambulance or a taxi may be called to transport the child accompanied by a staff member or the Supervisor.

Parking

Traffic is a major concern to all Whitney Public School and WCC parents. There is no parking or stopping in the school garage or driveway or on MacLennan Avenue, south of Rosedale Heights Drive. **THERE IS NO STOPPING OR PARKING ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF ROSEDALE HEIGHTS DRIVE east of MacLennan**, as doing so poses a danger to all children at drop-off and pick-up times. Please look for and obey the traffic signs around the school. Police will issue tickets as part of the school safety program.

Parents are not permitted in the parking garage for safety reasons.

Payment and Collection of Fees

The WCC sets an annual fee for each program. The registration fee is deducted from this fee and is required at the time of registration to confirm your child's space. This deposit is considered a part of your annual fee and is non refundable. The balance of the annual fee is divided into ten equal payments and post dated cheques are due with registration forms. Annual fees are due in advance of the school year for which the child is registered according to the fee schedule set by the Board of Directors. Fees take into consideration the occurrence of P.D. days and statutory holidays during the year.

Fees are to be paid in monthly installments provided by 10 post-dated cheques in the amount of the monthly fee and dated the first of each month. The first monthly installment is due on June 1st. Thereafter, the payments are due on the first of each month from September to May of the school year for which the child is registered. If you intend to pay the entire year's fee in one payment, the cheque should be

dated June 1st (for the full amount) or September 1st (with one monthly payment paid on June 1st). Fees for siblings may be paid together in one monthly cheque. The fee schedule and waitlist criteria is attached.

The Centre requires the cooperation of parents in paying their accounts promptly. A child will not be admitted to the program unless the required post-dated cheques have been received by June 1st before the start of the school year. The WCC has an Unpaid Account Policy, which is available upon request

Cheques that are returned by the parent's financial institution for any reason must be resubmitted in certified form together with a penalty of \$25. Parents whose cheques are returned as NSF or for any other reason twice in any school year shall be required to certify all future cheques for the balance of the school year.

Child Care Receipts

A record of the previous year's fees and other monies paid to the Centre will be provided to each parent by the bookkeeper, signed by the Supervisor or the Treasurer. Tax receipts are not mailed unless requested. Fee receipts will not be issued until all outstanding fees and penalties are paid. Parents who decide to pay for the year in one lump sum, or by term, should be aware that receipts for income tax purposes are prepared on a cash received basis, so all funds received during the calendar year are included in the receipt for that tax year.

Admission

A child will not be admitted into a program until all registration forms, including the public health form accurately recording up-to-date immunizations are submitted to the Centre office. Information collected is in order to meet the needs of the child and family and to comply with applicable legislation. See our Privacy Policy for more detail.

Families must re-register for each school year and although priority is given to current WCC families, continued placement cannot be guaranteed from year to year.

Withdrawal

In the case of a withdrawal (term defined below) a minimum notice of **THREE CALENDAR MONTHS** must be given in writing to the Supervisor. Otherwise, THREE month's fees will be forfeited.

Please note that a "withdrawal" includes any change in a child's program that would reduce the fees payable for such child, including but not limited to, a reduction in the number of days, the elimination of the lunch program, and/or the withdrawal from any child care program.

The WCC is a not-for-profit childcare centre, and as such, the Centre plans its yearly budget based on the upcoming year's registrations. The Centre strives to maintain a balanced budget in every school year. To reduce the financial and practical difficulties associated with large changes in program enrolment, and to help ensure that all families of the WCC can be accommodated according to their program choices, the Centre has instituted this Withdrawal Policy. The WCC strictly enforces this Policy.

Late Pick Up and Late Fees

The Centre is open until 6:00 p.m. In view of the serious inconvenience to staff members caused by late pick-ups, the Board of Directors has adopted the following procedure:

If a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. the parent will be called. If there is no answer, by 6:15 p.m. all emergency numbers supplied by the parent will be called. All parents must supply a minimum of two emergency contacts on the registration form provided. These may include neighbours, relatives or family friends.

IF THE PARENT OR EMERGENCY CAREGIVER HAS NOT BEEN CONTACTED BY 7:00 P.M. THE POLICE AND CHILDREN'S AID WILL BE CALLED.

After two instances of pick-up occurring after 7:00 p.m., or after repeated offenses of a less serious nature, the Board will consider terminating the parent's membership.

Parents who are late picking up their children will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. Late fees apply to the 11:20 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 3:20 p.m. pick up as well as the closure time of 6:00 p.m. Parents will be informed and asked to initial their time of arrival. The Supervisor, or Assistant Supervisor will issue a bill for late fees. **If a child is picked up late three times after 6:00 p.m. the late fee increases to \$10.00 per minute for each consequent offence for the balance of the school year.** The staff is compelled by the Board of Directors to implement this policy consistently. Your co-operation is appreciated. If a staff member is detained until after 6.15 they will be offered a cab ride home. The late parent will be billed for the cost of the cab in addition to the late fee.

Absences of Child

Please notify WCC (416-481-0211 or wcc@on.aibn.com) by 9:00 a.m. if your child is sick or is to be absent for one or more days. If your child is not coming in because of illness, it is also important to telephone the Centre to advise the Supervisor about the sort of illness that your child has contracted. This will help staff to identify symptoms in other children with whom your child has come in contact. Refunds are **not** given for days on which your child is absent, whether due to sickness or vacation, nor does the Centre provide make-up days. The public

school does not inform us of school age child absences. You must call the school and the Child Centre to report absent children.

Parent Involvement

Parents should be prepared to stay with their child if needed during the first few days at the Centre. This provides a transition period for the child and gives the parents an opportunity to observe the program. It is often reassuring for children to be picked up early on the first few days of school.

Parents are welcome to visit the classroom, and to share talents, traditions or interests with the children. Our aim is to build a strong connection between home and school. Staff build the program around the children's strengths and interests, and we value your input. If you would like to visit your child's class to observe or to assist with a specific activity, please speak directly to your child's teacher, or to the Supervisor.

One very important way in which parents can be involved is through open communication with the staff. It helps the staff if parents take a few minutes at the beginning or end of the day to let them know of any special or unusual events that may have an impact on your child. Likewise, the staff will want to let parents know of any highlights or upsets that have occurred during the child's day. If pick-up or drop-off times are too hectic to allow for this, please feel welcome to call during the day to speak to a member of staff.

We offer opportunity for parents to meet other families and staff and Board members through several social events during the school year. These include: coffee mornings, a cocktail evening/fundraiser, our Open House and our Annual Family Picnic.

Volunteers

Parents visiting their child's classroom do not have to be criminal reference checked, but are never left alone with the children.

Any person who volunteers in the program must be criminal reference checked. Please be aware that volunteers are not permitted to be alone with a child at any time.

Parents may also volunteer by joining our parent Board of Directors. Our AGM is in October of each year and Board Members are elected at that time. If you are interested in a position on the Board, please contact the Vice President. A list of Board Members is posted opposite the office.

Parents may also volunteer by helping with laundry, playground clean-up and gardening, and by helping out at special events such as our annual family picnic.

Whitney Public School

The Centre gives priority to families living inside the Whitney School District, and may accept optional attendance children if space permits. Please visit the TDSB website for information regarding their policies, including their Optional Attendance Policy, or call the public school at 416-393-9380. Having a child registered at the Centre does not necessarily make your child eligible to register at the Whitney Public School.

We have a very positive working relationship with the public school. To assist us in providing a seamless day for the children who attend both the Whitney Public School and the Centre, please sign the Sharing of Information Form.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are held monthly, and instructions in case of fire are posted in each room. The public school usually has two lockdown drills each year, and the Centre participates in those drills.

Emergencies

It is very important that the Centre be able to get in touch with a parent or an alternate in case of emergency. To ensure that parents are immediately accessible in the case of an emergency, it is essential that the Centre be notified of any change in home address, employment address, phone numbers, etc. If for any reason parents are not at their regular place of employment (e.g. at a meeting, conference, etc.), they are required to ensure that they can be contacted should the need arise. We ask that each parent arrange an alternate adult who we can phone in the case of emergency, if the parent is not available. Two emergency contacts other than parents must be listed on the emergency form. These contacts must reside in Toronto.

A child needing emergency medical care will be taken to the Hospital for Sick Children or the nearest available hospital as required. Parents will be notified immediately. If parents have special requirements regarding hospital treatment of their child, they must communicate these requirements to the WCC in writing.

In an emergency, the safety and care of the children is the prime concern of the Centre. Emergency and fire procedures are posted in the Centre. Parents must read these procedures and be familiar with them. It should be noted that if the Centre requires temporary emergency shelter, staff and children would be housed at Rosedale United Church, 159 Roxborough Dr. (at Glen Road). If travel to this location is not possible, or if the entire school is relocated, the Centre will follow directions given by the Toronto District School Board. The Centre will contact parents from this location. If there are reasons to prevent you receiving notification by phone or email in an emergency, this must be communicated at the time of registration to the Supervisor, who will make alternate arrangements to notify you in an emergency. Please see Accessibility Policy.

Field Trips

The Supervisor must approve all trips other than daily walks outside the Centre. For major trips, a written plan, including such details as destination, times, number of children, transportation, etc., will be provided to the Supervisor and will be available to parents. Parents will be given advance notice of the trip and their consent requested on the appropriate form. The children may travel by TTC or by school bus. Please be aware that there are not seat belts provided in the school bus.

Dogs and Animals

Dogs are not permitted on school property. If you are walking a dog to or from school, the public school provides an area for securing dogs during drop off and pick up. Please be aware that tying a dog near our gate may be frightening to some children arriving for school. The area for securing dogs is on Rosedale Heights Drive.

* Service animals are permitted, but must have up to date vaccinations.

Contact with animals can provide valuable learning opportunities for children, however there are also risks from allergies, injuries and infections. Children younger than five years of age are more likely to develop serious illness from infections due to microorganisms such as Salmonella and E.coli. Animals such as reptiles and amphibians are known carriers of Salmonella and tropical birds can carry psittacosis. While at the WCC, children may have contact with dogs, cats, rabbits, birds and rodents such as mice, hamsters, rats, gerbils, guinea pigs and fish. Staff must always ensure these have a good temperament to be handled safely by children and must be free of disease.

The Centre does not permit pet birds or venomous or toxin producing spiders or insects on premises.

The Centre does not permit exotic animals such as hedgehogs or monkeys, or inherently dangerous animals such as lions, cougars or bears on premises.

Amphibians, reptiles, live poultry, ferrets and farm animals are not permitted on WCC premises.

Children under the age of five are not permitted to handle reptiles or amphibians on field trips.

Any animal bite is promptly reported to Toronto Public Health.

Smoke Free

Please be aware that the Centre is a smoke free facility. As stated in Municipal Code, Chapter 709, no person shall smoke, or hold lighted tobacco within a 9-metre radius surrounding any entrance or exit of the Whitney Child Centre or Whitney Public School. The prohibition does not include public highways within this radius.

Photographs

Parents may take photographs of their own children in the Centre, but must not take pictures of any other children. To bring a camera into the Centre you must first speak to your child's teacher or to the Supervisor. Families should be aware that during special events, including, but not limited to, Graduation, our Annual

Family Picnic and Concerts, we do allow parents to take photographs and/or video recordings of the event. Staff take photographs during the course of the school year for use in displays in the Centre. They may also use these pictures for artwork, graduation, record keeping, observations and portfolios, etc. Parents sign permission forms in the registration package to allow pictures of children to be posted and shared with other families when staff send information and observations home.

Students

The WCC participates in a number of programs involving students. Under the Toronto District School Board's policy of Cooperative Learning Centre, high school students from Family Studies programs do placements in the Centre. We also have students from ECE courses. Under the supervision of our staff, the students gain practical experience while bringing new ideas to the Centre. Notice of ECE and high school student placements will be posted. Please make an effort to get to know these people. They contribute a great deal to the program.

Centre Closures

While we realize that the closing of the Centre at any time other than the normal closing time will cause some inconvenience to parents, there may be times when such an action is necessary because of bad weather conditions or an emergency that affects the school building.

The Supervisor has both the authority and responsibility to act in the interests of the Centre and the children in his/her care. If weather conditions or building conditions (i.e. a prolonged loss of power) warrant an early closing time, the Centre will contact all parents and ask for their cooperation in picking up their children.

If the weather conditions are bad and you are concerned, please do not hesitate to call the Centre to inquire about any emergency plans. If you do not connect with a person, please listen to the message on the phone for specific information. If the weather conditions result in the Toronto District School Board closing the school, the WCC will be closed. School closing announcements are made on major Toronto radio stations. We contact parents by phone or email. If you need to be contacted by an alternate method, please let the Supervisor know.

Health Policy

We realize that health is a complex issue in a child care centre, and in formulating our health policy we have been cognizant of the following factors:

- the inability of a child who is ill to cope with the day's program;
- the need to protect our children from contagious disease;
- the need of parents for guidelines to assist them in deciding whether to bring a child who is "not quite well" to school; and
- the responsibility and commitment of parents who work full-time.

On arrival staff will observe children for symptoms of illness.

Staff will not accept children who are unwell as per the Health Policy.
Staff will record any symptoms of illness on the appropriate form and in the daily log.

ILLNESS: Our basic guideline is that a child should not be in the Centre if he or she has any of the following:

- a) A temperature of 100 degrees F/38 degrees C or more. If a child has been away from the Centre (or sent home) with a fever, he or she may not return until his/her temperature has been normal for 24 hours.
- b) Serious diarrhea. If a child has serious, unexplained diarrhea (i.e. foul smelling, unusual coloration, mucous-like liquid or burning), the child should not be in the Centre, and if the child has two or more such movements during the day, the parents will be asked to take him/her home.
- c) Serious, unexplained vomiting.
- d) Extensive and unexplained rashes.
- e) Paleness, flushed face or constant crying.
- f) Yellow discharge from the eyes, crustiness around the eyes, puffy or red eyes.

These signs and symptoms are fairly obvious and indicate that the child is ill. Unfortunately, there are other times that it is difficult to determine if the child should be at school. A slight cold or the end of an illness are two examples. In such instances, please use reasonable judgment. There are other times when a child is not showing signs of a definite illness but is not able to handle the stress of the day. In these instances, it will be the decision of the Supervisor and the staff as to whether the child should be taken home.

- If a child is unwell, the child will be placed on a bean bag chair or cot in the Supervisor's office. (If for some reason this is not feasible the child will rest in a quiet area of the classroom.)
- The Supervisor (or her designate) will call the parent(s) to advise them of the child's symptoms and to ask for immediate pick-up of the child.
- If the Supervisor (or her designate) is unable to contact a parent, she will call the individuals indicated on the child's file as emergency contacts.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASE: If a child is suspected of having any contagious disease, the child must not be in the Centre, and if symptoms develop during the day, the parents will be asked to take the child home immediately.

REPORTING: The Supervisor reports cases of communicable disease, vaccine preventable disease, chicken pox, and outbreaks of enteric illness to Toronto Public Health, in accordance with public health requirements.

BITES: Staff complete an accident/injury report for all biting incidents. Parent are given a copy of the report. Confidentiality is vital and names are never disclosed. Bites however minor are always reported to parents. In the event a bite breaks the skin staff will provide parents with a Toronto Public Health in-

formation sheet. If the bite breaks the skin and the biter is known to have Hepatitis B, C or HIV, Toronto Public Health will be informed.

Medication

The staff can administer medicine that has been prescribed by a doctor, but only if authorized to do so by the child's parent. If a child is on such medication, his/her parents must sign the medicine log at the Centre and discuss with the staff the timing and amounts of the medicine to be given.

Medication must be in the original container with a prescribed label intact.

The staff are not permitted to administer any non-prescription medication, including topical creams, to any child without the consent of the child's doctor in writing. The staff may apply sunscreen and diaper cream with permission from the parent.

Immunization

The Centre is required to keep a record of the immunizations administered to each child. We require a signed health form from the parent noting the date and type of immunization **before** the child will be admitted to the Centre. **It is very important that parents keep immunization records up to date.** A child may be suspended or not admitted if the immunization is not on file. If you have chosen not to immunize your child, a public health form must be completed, signed and filed with the Centre and with Toronto Public Health. Children that are not immunized are required to be kept at home for the duration of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.

Specialized Services

Teachers observe children's developmental progress throughout the course of their enrolment at the WCC. In the event that a teacher has a concern regarding any aspect of a child's development or behavior, they will notify the Supervisor. After observation and consultation with staff, the Supervisor will contact the parent to discuss the concern. At this point the Supervisor will direct the parent to suggested services, e.g. speech therapist, pediatrician. The WCC also has access to various consultants who can come into the Centre to observe and suggest strategies for staff and/or parents. This consultant may also develop an Individual Support Plan in consultation with our staff, or recommend further follow up by other professionals. The parent is required to sign a permission form before a consultant or other professional is permitted to come in and observe the child. Individual Support Plans will be developed for every child identified with special needs. Information regarding this plan will be gathered from the staff, family, Supervisor and any other professional involved with the child. The plan will be kept in both the child's class and office file. Staff will ensure the plan is updated as appropriate and strategies are kept current and relevant. The parent will sign off on the plan each time it is revised.

We welcome input from other professionals regarding a child's needs, and wherever possible, staff are willing to incorporate strategies for individual needs into the program. If however a child is deemed to need one on one support to enable them to remain in the Centre, the child's parents are required to pay in full for that support. If a child is enrolled in the public school and has been assessed as requiring a one on one aide to ensure safety, or to have developmental needs met, it is expected that the family will provide the one on one aide if the child is enrolled in the Centre. The TDSB may provide the funding for the aide whilst the child is enrolled in the public school, but the Centre is unable to provide funding for this support.

Families with children enrolled in both the Centre and Whitney Public School are requested to sign a permission form to allow us to share information relevant to the well being of your child.

Board of Directors

Although many decisions regarding the children's day are made by the Centre's staff, general policy decisions are made by the Board of Directors.

There are up to 12 positions on the Board of Directors: elected positions plus the past president, and one non-voting member (the Centre Supervisor). Our Board of Directors' board is opposite the office. Dates of meetings as well as a full list of Directors can be found there.

General meetings may be called as needed. Board of Directors' meetings will take place once a month or as need dictates. Any parent may make a written submission on any matter pertaining to the Centre at any time for consideration by and reply from the Board. Any parent wishing to meet with the Board is to make arrangements for a meeting through the Secretary.

The following are, in general, the areas of responsibility of the Board of Directors.

1. Decisions concerning the Program Statement of the Centre.
2. Periodic evaluations of the program.
3. Decisions concerning the hiring, disciplining and dismissal of staff.
4. Decisions concerning staff salaries and terms and conditions of employment.
5. Decisions concerning registration and fee structure.
6. Establishment and monitoring of the budget.
7. Management of revenue.
8. Decisions concerning operating procedures.
9. Annual policy review and policy development. (All WCC policies are available on request.)
10. Resolution of conflict with staff or parents, which has not been resolved by the Supervisor.

The Supervisor works closely with the Board of Directors with respect to all aspects of the Centre's management and attends all Board meetings. Should parents have any questions or concerns about their child, please do not hesitate to speak to the Supervisor.

May we respectfully remind you that positions held on the Board of Directors are voluntary and, at times, very time-consuming. We would appreciate compliance with the regulations in order to make our jobs easier and more pleasant!

APPENDICES

The following policies are attached to this handbook:

Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy;
Parent/Guardian and Student Code of Conduct;
Inclusion Policy;
Anti Bias/Anti Racism Policy;
Child Abuse: Policy and Procedures;
Serious Occurrence Policy;
Positive Behaviour Guidance Policy and Guidelines;
Supervision Policy;
Human Rights Policy;
Smoke Free Policy
The Accessibility Policy for Customer Service; and
The Privacy Policy;
Fee Schedule;
Waitlist Criteria.

More information can be found on our website: whitneychildcentre.com

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