



WELCOME

We would like to welcome everyone to the 2016-17 year at the Whitney Child Centre. We are happy you have made the decision to send your child to the WCC; our very well trained and experienced team of staff is busy preparing to start the new school year. We strive to ensure your family will have the best experience possible. Please speak to us immediately if you have any concern or question, or if you would like feedback regarding your child's experience at the Centre.

Start dates are staggered over the first two weeks, so please ensure you know the day your child is scheduled to come to school. **If you have not done so as yet, please bring in or email a family photo.** The teachers create a family board in each classroom.

All forms and information, including immunization, must be completed and submitted **prior** to your child starting school. Children with anaphylaxis cannot start in the program until parents have submitted all the required forms and trained the staff in the child's individual allergy treatment plan and provided two EpiPens.

We will be organizing a coffee morning for families to come in and meet and chat with other parents. More details regarding this will be emailed home in the first few weeks of school.

STAFF

We are proud to have an exceptional team of staff. Each member of our team is very well qualified to care for your child, and each staff member brings their own unique talents, characteristics and experience to create a knowledgeable and caring environment. Staff are responsive and sensitive to each child's needs while planning a program to meet the needs of the group as a whole.

All our staff are all trained in First Aid and CPR. Our permanent staff are trained in food handling. Staff are guided by our Program Statement when planning and implementing our program and activities. Our teachers plan their programs using an Emergent Curriculum philosophy and the ELECT framework. The teachers use the ELECT continuum of development in their observations of the children and to record the learning observed in the children's play. The teachers post observations and documentation panels inside the classroom and in our hallway. Program plans are

posted outside the classrooms so you can see the daily activities that your child is offered. On the programming board we post a list of some of the books and songs used that month in the classroom. Yoga, stretching, and mindfulness are incorporated daily into circle time and transitions. Teachers ensure we have a balance of active and quiet activities throughout the day. Individual observations are kept in the child's class file and are also sent home. Photographs may accompany the observations. More information on our curriculum is posted on the program board outside the office. We are licensed under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. The Provincial documents, *How Does Learning Happen* and *Think Feel Act* are also available to parents on this board and provide valuable information on the direction of child care in our Province. They can also be found on our website.

All our teaching staff are registered with the College of Early Childhood Education. Please read more about our talented staff in the lobby. Our staff is very proactive at attending professional development and taking courses throughout the year.

Our team of staff is:

108 - Toddler (18 months to 2 1/2 years): Karen McGarrell, Wendy Balfour, Nathalie Zeta (morning) and Ashley Meyer.

107 - Pre-school (2 1/2 plus): Marie Foley, Kiloran Fensom and Cristina Alves.

106 - Pre-school (2 1/2 plus): Pam Millington and Sarah White.

105 - Kindergarten (JK/SK) and morning Pre-school: Katie Munro and Ashley Larabee and Anne-Marie Williams.

114 - School-age grades 1-6: Rosemary Fagan, Nathalie Zeta and Nancy Kirkland

Kim Challenger is the Supervisor of the Centre.

Rosemary Fagan is the Assistant Supervisor

Housekeeping and Break relief: Jennifer Garcia (Merlyn Benecio on Mat leave)

COMMUNICATION/ACCESSIBILITY

Please ensure you are familiar with all policies of the Whitney Child Centre by reading our Program Statement and [Parent Handbook](#); these were in your registration package and include many of our policies and procedures. We will resend them next week. All policies are available in the office, on the Parent Noticeboard, in each classroom and in the staff room. They can also be found on our website. We have been reworking our website over the summer and the new website should be

launched shortly. If you have any difficulty reading or accessing our information please let us know, we are more than happy to help. Copies of our Program Statement and Parent Handbook can also be found in our lobby. [If you require any assistance accessing any of our programs, information or facilities, please let us know.](#)

If you should have any questions, problems or concerns do not hesitate in speaking to Kim, Rosemary or to one of your child's teachers. Information from parents and family is key in providing quality care. [Good communication](#) is vital to both the well being of the children and to the success of our program. It is very important that your child senses a good relationship between parent and teacher to ensure that he/she feels comfortable in our environment. We welcome ideas, suggestions and participation from all parents. This is especially important at this time of year when many children are experiencing separation anxiety, and parents can feel very stressed and upset. Talk to staff about different ways of coping with this, as consistency is extremely important, and believe us, the tears don't last forever! Children may cry on separation for a few weeks, but after they settle in, they will be crying because they don't want to leave!!! Separation is often harder on parents. We know from prior experience that it is normal for children to be upset when their parent leave them in an unfamiliar environment, but we also know that our staff will reassure your child and provide both love and care, and an amazing program to ensure your child thrives. Our goal is for your child to develop a strong relationship with staff and peers. If you are feeling upset, email or phone for feedback. We are happy to give you frequent updates during the transitional period.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our [Board of Directors](#) remains the same as in 2015-16, until our Annual General Meeting in October. There is information about the Board on the noticeboard next to the office, meeting dates will be posted as well as names and phone numbers of Board Members. Board members may be contacted at any time. Our [Parent Noticeboard](#) opposite room 107 has useful information including licensing, copies of Centre inspections, fees and dates of closure. Families and nannies often post ads on this board. Please be aware that we are not responsible for the ads or info posted by other individuals. Our Board of Directors is currently organizing our [annual fundraising event and silent auction](#) for early November. More information will be sent home soon. The evening is usually a huge success. [Please let Kim know if you have a service or item you would like to donate to our auction.](#) Fundraising dollars have really helped to enhance our program through providing new equipment, the painting of our rooms, and specialists such as karate and Monkeynastics.

INFORMATION

Mail, artwork, info, etc. is left for you in your child's cubby. To be environmentally friendly, we try to email as much information as possible. We email home a monthly newsletter to enable you to see what is going on in your child's classroom and in the Centre. We can send the newsletter to [up to 2 different email addresses](#), so let us know if you want to add or change the email that we are using. Hard copies of the newsletter will also be available. Toddler daycare children will receive a communication sheet; each classroom has a class communication book, and the staff room (104) has a communication book for parents to use. These are read daily by staff, and information regarding your child should be recorded in these. We will be sending a parent questionnaire home in the spring.

PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS

At any time throughout the year parents may request a [parent/teacher interview](#) to be arranged at a mutually convenient time, please feel welcome to initiate discussions on your child's progress at any time. If it is difficult to speak to staff at pick up or drop off time, please call to speak to a teacher by phone – 416 481-0211 or arrange a suitable time to chat without the children around.

We find that having staff available to schedule a meeting at any time throughout the year allows for more relaxed and informative meetings without a time restraint.

When we have scheduled particular dates for parent teacher interviews we have found that they are very hurried and formatted; it is also difficult to find times that suit everyone's schedule. It is difficult to talk meaningfully about a child in ten to fifteen minutes and after four or five interviews in a row it can be hard to share the amount and quality of information we would like. As a result, we prefer to arrange interviews individually. A form will be sent home each term to fill in if you would like to arrange an interview.

ENTER AND EXIT

The door between the playground and room 106 is not an entrance or an exit. Parents or caregivers must enter through the public school doors on the east side of the building. The doors are locked from 9.00 – 11.10 a.m. and 1.00 and 3.10 p.m. The buzzer must be used to enter during these times. To be consistent with the [teachers' safety expectations](#), we ask that [children are not permitted to run in the hallways or open the blue hallway doors](#) without an adult.

[Children are not permitted to eat in the hallway, if you bring a snack for your child please wait until you are outside the Centre. This helps to protect those children with food restrictions and allergies.](#)

WE HAVE CHILDREN ATTENDING THE CENTRE WITH SERIOUS AND LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES. FOOD THAT THESE CHILDREN ARE HIGHLY ALLERGIC TO INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO TREE NUTS AND PEANUTS.

PD DAYS AND STAT HOLIDAYS

There will a list of Public School Holidays and PD days on our website, go to whitneychildcentre.com. **On PD days the WCC only accepts full time daycare children signed up for the 7.45 – 6.00 program, and kinder and school-aged children who have been registered for these days.**

Statutory holidays are listed in the Parent Handbook and on the website and are posted on the Parent Noticeboard. Fees reflect both PD days and stat holidays.

WITHDRAWAL AND CHANGES

If you decide to withdraw your child or reduce your child's registration in our program, we require **three calendar's month notice** in writing. Please be aware that this applies to both withdrawal and a reduction in days or time of service. If you would like to change your registration in any way, please do so in writing. [This policy is strictly enforced.](#)

TAX RECEIPTS

Parents may request a receipt for fees paid. Annual tax receipts for child care fees are prepared by our bookkeeper off-site and will be placed in your child's cubby by March 2017.

Please be aware that if you pay for the entire year, the receipt will reflect the payment in the year the cheque was deposited.

UPDATES, ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

It is very important to keep us updated as to any changes with [phone numbers](#), addresses or [health/allergy/immunization information](#); if there have been any changes please let us know immediately. It is also important that we have several emergency contacts on file.

[Class lists](#) will be emailed as soon as all information is updated. Class lists include child's name, parent's name, home address, email addresses and home phone numbers.

We must be informed, preferably in writing, if there are any changes to the people authorized to pick up your child. Any new pick up person should be brought in and

introduced to staff. We cannot release a child, even to a relative, if this has not been arranged with us previously.

No one under the age of 16 is permitted to pick up a child from the Centre.

Part time children may not be dropped off in the playground prior to 8.45 a.m. The morning part time program is 8.45 a.m. to 11.20.

All children, regardless of age, must be signed in and out by an adult each day. School age children may not arrive at the Centre by themselves for the morning program.

If you have a child in the **school age program** it is especially important that we are informed if they are absent. The public school does not inform us if your child is absent or has left school early. Children transition independently between the child centre and the school, and children not checking in at 3.30 have to be searched for, and it can be very frustrating to do this only to find out the child was taken home early by a parent or has gone on a playdate. Arrangements to go home with a friend must be reported to us in advance, before 3.00 p.m. Parents must email both Kim and Rosemary, or leave a phone message.

If school age children are going to be late checking in they must call 114 (grades 2 to 6) 106 (grade 1) on the internal phone system to let the teachers know. **Please ensure you inform us prior to 3.00 p.m. if your child will not be attending the school age program.**

We escort grade one children to and from their classrooms for the first few days until we feel they are confident in making this transition independently.

If your child has not checked in by 4.00 p.m. and we have not been able to locate them or contact a parent we will call the police and report your child as missing.

HEALTH

Please ensure you are familiar with our health policy in the Parent Handbook. If it is your child's first experience in a group setting he or she may be prone to more infections, colds, etc. than usual. Children do start to build up immunity after initial exposure. We always inform parents if we have any serious infectious disease in the Centre - chicken pox, strep throat, etc. Efficient hand washing is the most effective way to reduce the spread of disease, both at home and school. Head lice can sometimes be a problem in the fall, more often with the kindergarten and school age

children. These are nothing to be embarrassed or worried about, (they prefer nice, clean hair) although they are a hassle!

MEDICATION

We can only administer **prescribed medication** to children, and medication must always be brought into the Centre in the original container, still displaying the label. We keep two locked boxes for medication: one in the fridge and one in the staff room cupboard. If your child should need medication, please ensure it is locked in the appropriate box before you leave. You must fill in and sign for the administration of the medication in our medication book. Medication will not be given without the parent's signed authority. **Never leave medication or vitamins in your child's bag or cubby.** Children with EpiPen's must provide us with two EpiPen's. One EpiPen is kept with the child, one is kept in the office. Diaper cream and sunscreen may only be applied with written parental consent.

FOOD AND ALLERGIES

Our catering company is Marvin Halpert Catering. This company provides our hot lunch and snacks. Menus are posted on the Nutrition Board, and copies are also available.

Children are not permitted to bring food into the Centre for snack or lunch unless previously arranged in writing with the Supervisor. We endeavour to provide a nut/peanut free environment; our Anaphylaxis Policy was included in your registration material. Please read it.

Your child should be taught never to share food, as we have several children with **severe allergies**, including anaphylaxis to nuts, peanuts and eggs. If your child has had peanut butter or nutella for breakfast or lunch please brush their teeth and wash their face and hands before coming to the Centre. **If a child has a severe peanut allergy even smelling a peanut product can cause a reaction.**

If your child has an allergy, please make sure we are familiar with the allergy and it's effects. One EpiPen is kept with the child; the second is kept in the office. Older children may carry their Epi-pens on their person. Parents of children with an Epi-pen must fill in an anaphylaxis alert, and must train the Centre staff in regards to their child's allergy before the child can start in the Centre.

CLEANING

The Centre uses PerCept as a cleaner and sanitizing product. We also use natural hand soap and dish soap. Our hand soap and dish soap supplier is Green Cricket. Take a look at their website www.greencricket.ca.

LATE FEES

If a parent or caregiver is late in picking up a child there is a late fee charged. Late fees are posted on the noticeboard. If you have been delayed, please call to let us know, this will reassure both your child and the staff. If you should happen to be late, staff will require you to sign the late book, and you will then be billed by the Supervisor. After 6.00 p.m. the late fees are a dollar each minute, **but if you are late more than three times, this fee will increase to ten dollars per minute for the balance of the school year.** Please remember that staff may have a long journey home at the end of a busy day and families of their own to care for. Late fees are to be paid for by cheque made payable to the WCC.

For those parents who have to pick up from the public school as well as the child centre it is preferable to pick up from us at 11.20 a.m. or 3.20 p.m. prior to picking up siblings from the school.

SHARING

It is our goal to reflect your family and it's values and traditions in our classroom environments. If there are any special events, family traditions or celebrations that you would like us to celebrate or discuss in your child's class please share these with our staff. At the same time, if you have any special skills or talents that you would like to share with the children, either at circle time, or by organizing an activity, please let us know. Teachers may ask you to help by sending in items needed, and we have a playground clean up each year when we ask for parents to volunteer. Parents may visit their child's class at any time, but all volunteers must be Police Reference Checked before commencing any volunteer work in the classroom.

[Nippissing Developmental Checklists](#) are used by the staff to document and assess child development. In September we will be distributing these very simple developmental checklists. The teachers will fill in a copy and as well we ask parents to do the same. Please complete the checklist and sign or initial before returning. This allows us to see if there is variation between skills used at home and school, and plan appropriately. Staff will always speak to parents regarding concerns, but if you have any concern of your own, please be proactive and speak to staff.

CLOTHING

Each child is given a hook and cubby for their clothing. **Please ensure all items are clearly labelled to avoid disappearance and confusion.** There are lost and found boxes in the hallway and lobby. Each child should bring in a change of clothing - even the oldest child can 'drown' themselves during water play, or cover himself or herself in paint or goop. Children are involved in messy activities, and even though all paints and markers are washable, we do recommend that the children are not sent in clothing that you would worry about being spoiled. If paint or glue does get on clothing it is best to soak or pre-treat straight away, rather than letting it sit for a day or two. **Footwear** should have non-slip soles and be suitable for running and climbing. There have been cases of children being strangled when playing in playgrounds with loose strings or scarves around their necks. Where possible, please remove drawstrings from clothing. Any scarves and drawstrings should be securely tucked into coats. Glove or mitten clips are preferable to strings. For toileting, clothing should have easy closures to encourage independence; belts and overalls can make easy access difficult! Look out for our annual label fundraiser.

All unclaimed items in our lost and found are donated to a charity in December, March and June.

WE LOVE PARENTS THAT LABEL. Please label all items sent into the Centre. Easy to use labels may be purchased from Mabel's Labels. A portion of sales contributes to the WCC fundraising campaign.

TOILETING

If you have a child in the pre-school program who is not toilet trained please discuss your toileting strategies with the teaching staff. When toilet training, please ensure we have sufficient changes of clothing. Often being in a group situation with other children will encourage toilet training, but it is important the child does not feel pressured. For part time, pre-school children (nursery school) in diapers, please leave diapers in the cubby provided. Your child should arrive in a clean, dry diaper and as they are only here for a short period of time, will only be changed if they have a bowel movement or are extremely wet. If they are ready for toilet training they will be taken to the washroom with the other children.

Please ensure your child has been taken to the washroom before being dropped off for either the morning or afternoon programs, the teachers are then able to focus their attention on the children, rather than dashing back and forth from the toilet!!!

PARKING

We would encourage you to walk to school with your child whenever possible to promote both good health and care for our environment, but if you do drive please follow the parking regulations to ensure the safety of all the children in our community.

We frequently encounter problems with parents parking incorrectly; please follow the parking signs outside the school. The drop off zone means that you only stop to let a child enter or exit your car. Parking is not acceptable in this area.

Parking is not permitted on the south side of MacLennan or on the south side of Rosedale Heights Drive, East of MacLennan.

Parents are not permitted in the school garage either in a car or on foot.

DOGS

Dogs are not permitted onto Board of Education Property. There is an area on Rosedale Heights Drive where dogs may be tied up. Please do not tie your dog to our playground fence, as this may be intimidating to some children.

SEPARATION ANXIETY

September is often a difficult month. If your child is not upset, you may be disturbed at seeing another child crying. Please remember that separation anxiety is a perfectly normal stage of development, and every child may experience it to a different degree or in a different way.

Some parents are upset when their child does not cry when they leave!! For many children this is their first time away from their parents or caregiver. Some children may cry for one day or two, some for a whole month, sometimes children do not cry at all for the first week or so, and then start to experience some problems saying goodbye. Some children are fine during the program, and then cry when mum picks them up! Remember we have a wonderful team of staff, and they are all trained and prepared to help. Staff will reassure and comfort your child, help to distract him or her with activities, and ensure she or he feels secure and happy in the new school environment.

Some pointers that may ease your way:

- It is really important that you understand that the tears, however loud or distressing are perfectly normal, and will not last forever. Often after you leave, your child will usually stop crying within a short while and join in with activities. You may want to

stay on the premises - have a coffee in room 104, or phone in to see how he or she is doing.

- Always tell your child what is happening, prepare him or her beforehand so she or he knows where they are going and what will happen.
- Take pictures of the class and teachers so you can talk about them at home.
- Return early for the first few sessions so your child understands that you will return. Leave something of yours to hold - maybe a lipstick kiss on a kleenex!
- Allow them to bring a special belonging or photo from home.
- Parents are welcome to stay and join in the program with their child, but when it is time for you to leave, always say goodbye. Reassure your child that you will be back. Some parents are tempted to tiptoe out to avoid the tears, but this can make the child feel abandoned and afraid, so please make a point, however difficult, of saying goodbye.
- It is important that you reassure your child, but do not confuse him or her by saying you are leaving and then changing your mind when tears appear. Be consistent. If you leave, leave for a set period of time, and stick to it. If you keep popping in and out, your child may have started to settle, and then have to go through the whole process once you reappear and leave. Sometimes on your return your child may start crying again as soon as you appear, reassure yourself that she or he has not been upset the whole time by talking to a member of staff. Make sure your child does not see you looking upset; look confident and happy and your child will be reassured that they are in a safe and happy place! Remember, you are modeling the behavior: you leave but you return. Consistency is key.
- It is very important that your child observes a positive relationship between you and our staff members. Talk about the Centre and staff in positive terms so your child feels you are comfortable and happy with the situation. Talk to staff and establish good communication. If he or she has special words unique to him for using the washroom or a special possession please let us know, otherwise your child may feel very frustrated when we do not understand.
- Have a coffee in the office, and talk to Kim, Rosemary or the teachers or to other parents if you are upset or feel stressed out!

- Remember it will not last forever and soon she will be complaining that she does not want to go home.

Lastly, we know we sometimes send home a lot of reading material, but please take time to read our Parent Handbook and our Program Statement. They provide much useful information to help you through your time at the Centre.

You will receive a class newsletter monthly as well as an office news-update.

Thank you, and enjoy the coming year, Kim Challenger