

Program Statement

Heritage Green Child Care Inc. is dedicated to supporting children's learning, development, health and well-being through caring and responsive Early Childhood Educators, who focus on active learning, exploration, play and inquiry, and who see children and their families as competent and able, and as active participants in all aspects of the program.

A key feature of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, is the focus on strengthening child care programs and ensuring high quality experiences for children. The CCEYA authorizes the Minister of Education to issue policy statements regarding programming and pedagogy for the purpose of guiding operators of child care and early year's programs. How does learning happen? Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) is the document used by Heritage Green Child Care Inc. The document has a strong pedagogical focus, indicating that the pedagogy is not a prescriptive formula that lays out a specific curriculum or activities but instead challenges the status quo and explores how learning happens for children. How Does Learning Happen? is organized around four foundational conditions that are considered essential to optimal learning and healthy development for children:



Belonging refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.



Well-being addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self-care, sense of self, and self-regulation skills.



Engagement suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.



Expression or communication (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.

The four foundations apply regardless of the child's age, ability, culture, language, geography, or setting. Unlike a structured curriculum, the conditions are high states of being that children naturally seek for themselves and should not be viewed as separate elements.

Goals:

All children and staff have the right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. Thus, all Early Childhood Operators and Educators have a professional obligation to advance equity. They can do this best when they are effectively supported by the early learning settings in which they work, and when they and their wider communities embrace diversity and full inclusion as strengths, uphold fundamental principles of fairness and justice, and work to eliminate structural inequities that limit equitable learning opportunities. We commit to fostering a compassionate, accepting, and inclusive environment in our organization and in each of our child care centres.

- All staff will promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of each child by providing a clean and safe environment, nutrition based on the Canada's Food Guide, access to drinking water throughout the day, limited transitions, eliminating any environmental issues that may cause undue stress to the child, unnecessary disruptions to play and reducing hazards that may cause injury. Educators will familiarize themselves with all information concerning any medical conditions, exceptionalities, allergies, food restrictions, medication requirements, and parental preferences in respect to diet, exercise and rest time.
- All staff will support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, and child care providers. The Director, Supervisor and Board of Directors will support this through the hiring of qualified, responsive, and well trained Early Childhood Educators who support families in their role as primary caregivers, and understand the needs of each child as an individual.
- All staff will encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way, and support their ability to self-regulate; acknowledging that each child is competent, curious and rich in potential. Staff will support self-regulation in children (defined as the child's ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention) Self-regulation in early development is influenced by a child's relationship with the important adults in that child's life, including the ECEs in the program. All staff will provide the experiences, support and encouragement that help young children learn to self-regulate, which is a crucial component of quality care.
- All staff will foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by providing a variety of activities, and an environment rich in content, that encourages choices, and active play, supported by qualified, attentive and interactive Early Childhood Educators
- All Staff will provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences. The Early Childhood Educators will observe the children and use that information to plan and

create a positive learning environment that is based on the interests of the child, and supported by all the adults in the child care environment, and be inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans. Educators will be responsible for introducing new ideas, interests, facts, concepts, skills and experiences to widen the child's knowledge and life experiences.

- All Early Childhood Educators need to be reflective practitioners who learn about children through listening, observation, documentation, and discussion with others, families in particular, to understand children as unique individuals. They will observe and listen to learn how children make meaning through their experiences in the world around them, and use this to have meaningful interactions, and engage children on a daily basis.
- Each child will experience indoor, and two hours of outdoor play (weather permitting) daily, as well as a time to rest and sleep if needed, quiet and active times, always being mindful of each child's needs and parental direction.
- Regular and ongoing communication with parents is an important component of the day. Communication may be in person, by phone, e-mail or through written and posted communication tools. Communication needs to come from all members of the organization, the Board of Directors, the Director, the Supervisor and all staff.
- Parents will be directed to resources outside of the centre if necessary and community partners such as early year's services, speech therapists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc., this will be an important part of the centres support to all children and their families. Three of our centres are located in schools, so relationships with principals, faculty and teachers are critical. We view the community as a valuable resource and our educators plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs. We seek out opportunity to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community
- The organization will provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice, to support continuous professional learning.
- All staff will build a climate of trust, honesty and respect in the workplace, working collaboratively in order to provide a safe, secure, healthy and inviting environment for all children and their families, building and maintaining healthy professional relationships that encourage growth and offering support and mentorship.
- **Our Extended Day Programs: Before, After School Days, & Full Day PD Day/Camp Programs**

Our extended day program for 4-5 year olds and 6-12 years of age is in keeping with our vision, to provide children and families with a seamless day from child care to the school day. At this particular age, children are looking for challenges and opportunities to help plan their activities all while building self-esteem and discovering their talents through social, emotional, physical and cognitive play. Our overriding goal is to support children

through this discovery and provide environments that are safe, fun, hands-on and play-based.

Program Statement Implementation Policy:

- All staff, students and volunteers will read the Program Statement and sign off in the Policy and Procedures Sign Off binder prior to employment or prior to interacting with children, and when the statement has been modified, and on an annual basis.
- The Director or Supervisor will review all sign offs by staff, students and volunteers and sign the review sheet to indicate that the process has been completed. The Director must be confident that the staff, volunteer or student is fully aware, and understands the Program statement and its implementation.
- Each classroom will maintain a binder containing observations, plans and documentation to support their understanding of the program statement. Copies of the documentation, relevant to their child, will be shared with all parents or guardians of the children in the program.
- The Director or Supervisor will meet on a regular basis with each team to establish a clear understanding of the program statement, to support staff in their delivery of the Program Statement and to aid the staff in self-reflection, to be recorded, and added to the binder on a regular basis. The Director will view each staff as competent and able, and give them time to be heard and respected, and to reflect on their own performance and their contributions to the environment and the development of each child in their care. The Director or Supervisor will use all observations, interactions and conversations to monitor all staff.
- Staff will reflect on How Does Learning Happen, by working through the reflection exercises in the document, by reviewing their observations and engaging children in meaningful activities, by maintaining communication with parents and building trusting relationships with the families, by working with their co-workers to create a safe and healthy environment and by taking the time to engage in self-reflection on a regular basis.

Heritage Green Child Care wants to ensure that all children have a safe and positive experience that promotes their growth as a learner. To this end, the Director or designate will observe staff interactions with children ensuring that they align with our program statement and beliefs in adult-child interactions. The following practices are not supported by our facility:

(a) Corporal punishment of the child;

(b) 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;

(c) 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;

(d) 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;

(e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or

(f) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

- In the event that the Director or Supervisor observes or is made aware of any practice that is not supported, they will address the issue with the staff member according to the strategies outlined in the Disciplinary Policy that is outlined in the Operations Manual.

Additionally, all Early Childhood Educators have made a commitment to abide by the standards of their profession as set out in the College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of practice. All Early Childhood Educators hold themselves accountable, and will use the Code of Ethics, the Standards of practice and the CCEYA to guide their decisions and practice.

We keep records pertaining to the implementation of, and staff adherence to, our Program Statement, for 3 years.

- **Note:** References and information in this living document are extracted from: "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years; and Ministry of Education's Extended Day Program