



PARENT HANDBOOK

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Welcome to Play, Learn, Grow Academy!

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is pleased to welcome you and your child to our program.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is a licensed childcare by the Ministry of Education's Licensing and Compliance Branch offering care for children ages 1.5-6 years of age.

A summary of our licensing report can be found on the parent bulletin board in our center.

All programs are supervised by Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) who maintain current training in Standard First Aid, CPR and are in good standing with the College.

The Parent Handbook is available to parents considering care and upon registration at our center free of charge to provide them with a better understanding of Play, Learn, Grow Academy.

If you have any questions, please ask our center supervisor. We will be more than happy to assist you.

Thank you for choosing Play, Learn, Grow Academy!

PROGRAM STATEMENT

The program offered by Play, Learn, Grow Academy is a reflection of research, theory and practice and is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policies, pedagogy and curriculum.

OUR VIEW OF THE CHILD

Consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy, our educators view children at all ages to be capable, competent, curious and rich in potential.

- We believe that children are capable of informed risk-taking and increasing independence within appropriate environments.
- We know that children are competent and able to question, examine, and investigate a wide variety of topics and areas of interest.
- We value children's curiosity and sense of wonder and know that children learn valuable skills through play.
- We believe that children come with lived experience and knowledge; that they are co-learners in our program.
- Our educators recognize and provide individualized support for each child as they grow and develop at their own pace- supporting each child to reach their full potential.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

With these priorities in mind, we have defined a set of goals and approaches, in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014; that guide our daily practices.

We know that through play-based learning and a culture of inquiry, children develop a strong foundation for learning in all areas. This includes:

1. **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, and the natural world.
2. **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.
3. **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 full 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.
4. **Expression or communication** suggests that through their bodies, words, and use of materials; children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials to support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills which are the foundations for literacy.

The following outline's Play, Learn, Grow Academy's program goals across key indicators of quality as defined in the Child Care and Early Years Act. The approaches speak to the strategies that educators use in implementing care activities and curriculum to achieve stated goals. Essentially the approaches speak to how the program will take place to achieve goals.

WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN

At Play, Learn, Grow Academy, the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of every child are our highest priorities. We are committed to providing a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive.

Health & Well-Being

- Educators welcome each child and family with a warm, personal greeting each day. During arrival, educators connect with families to learn about the child's health, mood, or any important information to help support a smooth transition into the program.
- Educators complete daily health checks in accordance with our Sanitary Practices Policy and monitor children's well-being throughout the day.
- If a child becomes ill while in our care, they will be closely monitored, encouraged to wash their hands regularly, and families will be contacted when necessary. If a child has a fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, they must be picked up as soon as possible.
- If an infectious illness is confirmed within the center, families will be notified, and information regarding the illness and recommended precautions will be posted.
- Toys, equipment, and high-touch surfaces are cleaned and sanitized regularly to help reduce the spread of germs.

Attendance & Safe Arrival

- To support a smooth start to the day and ensure all children are accounted for, children are expected to arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. By this time, classroom programming has begun, and late arrivals can disrupt the daily routine and planned learning experiences.
- If your child has a scheduled appointment, we require at least 24 hours' notice. In these circumstances, children may arrive as late as 10:30 a.m. Please notify the centre in advance so educators can plan accordingly and ensure your child is welcomed into the program with minimal disruption.
- Late arrivals after 9:30 a.m. may not be accommodated unless prior arrangements have been made with the Centre Supervisor.
- Educators accurately record each child's arrival and departure times daily.
- Educators will conduct a safe arrival check if a child does not show up by 9:30am. (Staff will send a message via Brightwheel, if no response is given by 9:45am staff or supervisor will call parent(s). If no answer has been received by either parent(s) staff or supervisor will contact the listed emergency contacts. If no response is received by the parent(s) or emergency contacts, the police will be notified.
- At pick-up, educators ensure every child is released safely to an authorized individual.
- If an unfamiliar person arrives to pick up a child, educators will request government-issued photo identification and verify that the individual is listed as an authorized pick-up before releasing the child.

Communication with Families

- Educators communicate regularly with families, providing updates about their child's learning, development, daily experiences, and overall well-being.
- Families are encouraged to share any information that may affect their child's day so educators can provide the best possible care and support.

Safety Practices

- Educators discuss safety with children throughout the day, helping them understand safety rules, make safe choices, and develop awareness in a variety of environments.
- Staff maintain required educator-to-child ratios and actively supervise children at all times.
- All educators are certified in Standard First Aid and CPR Level-C, including training in the administration of EpiPens and emergency response procedures.
- Allergy lists and individual anaphylaxis emergency plans are posted in classrooms and food preparation areas and are reviewed regularly.
- Children and staff participate in regular emergency preparedness drills, including fire and emergency evacuation procedures, to ensure everyone is familiar with safety expectations.
- Administration reviews annual inspections, including Ministry licensing, Public Health, Fire Department, and Health and Safety inspections, to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

Administration of Medication

Play, Learn, Grow Academy Child Care is able to administer prescription medication. It is preferable however that the children receive all medication at home, if at all possible. If your child requires medication by injection (e.g., insulin), please speak to the center supervisor as additional terms, conditions and training on your child's Individual Care Plan is required.

Prescription medications for acute, symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent of the child has given written authorization to do so by completing the child care center's Authorization for Medication Administration. The medication must have the original prescription with the child's name and administration instructions.

All medication must be taken home by the parent each night except in the case of medications required for life threatening situations (eg. asthma medication, Epi-pens, etc) these medications will be checked monthly for expiration dates. All medication will be stored as directed and is kept in a locked container at the center.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Supervision

Play, Learn, Grow Academy has a purpose and obligation to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in its care. Our center is equipped with a secured entrance with a buzzer access and video surveillance.

Children are supervised according to the staff to child ratios set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA). Play, Learn, Grow Academy has established Child Supervision policies, procedures and practices to maximize safety. Only Play, Learn, Grow Academy employees, 18 years of age and older, will have direct unsupervised access to the children in Play, Learn, Grow Academy's care. Students and volunteers, including those under 18 years of age, are an integral part of our program and support our commitment to mentoring. Students and volunteers support children under the direction of all Play, Learn, Grow Academy professionals; they are not counted as staff and are never left alone with a child/children.

Record Checks

Play, Learn, Grow Academy outlines its requirements for records checks, orientation and supervision of employees, students and volunteers through policy and procedures. A clear police Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) is required for all employees, students and volunteers 18 years of age and older. Students and volunteers under 18 years are required, under the CCEYA, to submit an Offence Declaration. Play, Learn, Grow Academy's policies outline requirements for additional records checks at regular intervals.

Positive Guidance Techniques

Play, Learn, Grow Academy Child Care strives to promote and support appropriate and positive interactions that contribute to and sustain a safe, inclusive, and accepting learning environment. Guidance techniques are related to the needs of the children in support of self-regulation and provide guidance strategies for children's behaviour to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, self-discipline, sensitivity in their interactions with others and ultimately social problem solving skills.

The following are taken into consideration when guiding children's behaviour:

- Appropriate to the developmental level of the child
- Used in a positive and consistent manner
- Designed to assist the child to learn appropriate behaviour
- Discussed with parents

Prohibited Practices

Under the Child Care and Early Years Act, the following are considered prohibited practices:

- a. Corporal punishment of a child;
- b. Physical restraint of a child, such as confining a child to a high chair, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision.
- c. Locking the exits of the center for the purpose of confining a 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;
- d. Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or derogatory language directed at a child 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 a 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.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy center supervisors — regularly monitors its programs and observes RECEs. Any use of these practices is investigated and may result in progressive discipline, up to and including termination. If you observe such practices, please immediately report them to the center supervisor.

Serious Occurrences

In spite of effective supervision and all the best precautions, serious occurrences (e.g., life-threatening injury or illness, fire or other disaster on premises.) can sometimes take place. All serious occurrences are reported to the Ministry of Education. A Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted at the center for 10 days following a serious occurrence to support increased transparency and access to information for parents. This posting will give parents brief information about the incident and outline follow-up actions taken and the outcomes, while respecting the privacy of the individuals involved. Longer-term actions taken

by the operator will also be included to help prevent similar incidents in the future, where applicable.

Many factors may lead to a serious occurrence report. A serious occurrence does not necessarily mean that an operator is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that children are at risk in the child care program.

Outdoor Play

At Play, Learn, Grow Academy, we recognize the many benefits of outdoor play and fostering a meaningful connection with nature. Research continues to demonstrate that regular outdoor experiences support children's overall development by encouraging exploration, curiosity, creativity, and active learning.

Outdoor play provides opportunities for children to investigate their environment using their minds, bodies, and senses. It promotes physical health and well-being while supporting emotional development, self-regulation, resilience, confidence, and independence. Through outdoor experiences, children also develop important social skills such as cooperation, communication, problem-solving, and teamwork.

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), children enrolled in full-day programs will participate in a minimum of two (2) hours of outdoor play each day, weather permitting. This time is typically divided between the morning and afternoon and may include educator-led activities, child-directed exploration, and nature-based learning experiences.

Families are asked to ensure their child arrives each day dressed appropriately for the weather. Outdoor play takes place in a variety of weather conditions, including light rain, snow, and cooler temperatures. Waterproof clothing, boots, hats, mittens, sunscreen, and other seasonal items help children remain comfortable and fully participate in outdoor learning experiences.

There are occasions when outdoor play may be shortened, modified, or cancelled due to extreme weather conditions or other health and safety concerns, such as severe thunderstorms, extreme heat or cold, poor air quality, or other environmental hazards. When outdoor play is not possible, children will participate in indoor gross motor activities that encourage active movement and physical development whenever space permits.

At Play, Learn, Grow Academy, we believe that every season provides valuable opportunities for learning, discovery, and play. Whether children are exploring nature, building snow structures, observing insects, or splashing in puddles, outdoor experiences foster a lifelong appreciation for the natural world and support healthy growth and development.

Outdoor community walks

Play, Learn, Grow Academy programs often go on neighborhood walks, visiting parks, libraries and natural outdoor areas. These outings provide children the opportunity to explore natural environments and challenge themselves through physical activity and experiences.

Field trips/bus rides

Play, Learn, Grow Academy may go on occasional field trips that require school bus transportation. Families will be notified in advance of all trip details including specific modes of transportation. Where families do not wish their child to participate in specific outings or events, it is the responsibility of the family to arrange for alternative care for the duration of those activities.

REST PERIOD

All children are provided with a daily rest period (of 2 hours) as part of the program routine. Rest time supports children's physical, emotional, and developmental needs by allowing them an opportunity to relax, recharge, and engage in quiet experiences.

All children are expected to remain on their assigned cot/bed for a minimum of one (1) hour during the scheduled rest period. Children are not required to sleep; however, they are provided with a consistent opportunity to rest their bodies and participate in a calm environment that respects the needs of other children who are sleeping.

Children who do not fall asleep after the designated rest period may be invited to participate in quiet activities, such as reading books, puzzles, drawing, or other table-based activities, while continuing to respect the rest needs of their peers.

Educators will not prevent or intentionally keep a child awake during rest time. If a child falls asleep, they will be permitted to rest and sleep for the remainder of the scheduled rest period, within the programs designated nap time frame.

Educators will monitor children throughout the rest period and ensure that all children are supervised, comfortable, and supported according to their individual needs.

Preventing Child Illness

Although some illness is inevitable in group care, our educators try to minimize this by practicing good hygiene, sanitizing toys and equipment regularly, and making daily health checks. We encourage children to participate in tidying and organizing their environment. Educators will model and support children with procedures for routine hand washing when entering the classroom from being outside, before and after food preparation, handling and eating, as well as toileting.

Ill Child Policy

Play, Learn, Grow Academy Staff carry out regular health inspections of all children as they arrive each day and follow the Department of Public Health's regulations to determine any illnesses.

Your child may be refused admittance and require a doctor's note if any of the following are noted:

- Unusual skin rash
- Heavy mucous
- Red and/or irritated eyes
- Head lice/nits
- Discharge from eyes/ears
- Any communicable disease
- Persistent pain
- Persistent cough/Strep
- Unusual/infectious looking sores
- A cold that hinders day to day functioning
- Being unable to fully participate in program
- A sore throat
- Fever
- Digestive upset– diarrhea
- Digestive upset–vomiting
- An earache
- Swollen neck glands

If the child becomes ill during the day, the parent will be contacted to pick the child up as soon as possible. It is, therefore, essential that staff be able to locate the parent(s) or designate should an illness or emergency arise. A sick child does not function well at school and his/her presence may infect others. Please be prepared for emergency care at home when necessary.

If a child is absent due to illness for 3 or more days or the child has a communicable disease, a Doctor's Note is required to accept the child back into the program. Play, Learn, Grow Academy does not require a note for a child who has been away with Chicken pox; however, we do require that a child not return until the spots have completely scabbed over.

It is Play, Learn, Grow Academy's right to refuse admittance to a child for any of the above reasons and parents must abide by such decisions.

When a Child is Ill

All children in attendance must be able to participate in all areas of the program, including outdoor play. If a child becomes ill, parents/guardians will be contacted to make arrangements for their child to be picked up if necessary. In order to minimize the spread of contagious illnesses we kindly ask that parents/guardians keep their children home if they are not feeling well.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy follows exclusion guidelines for communicable diseases as set out by the Simcoe Muskoka Public Health Unit. Fact sheets are posted in the center when there is confirmation of a communicable disease

Pediculosis (head lice) is not a regulated public health condition and, although easily spread, is not considered a communicable disease. Head lice can be transmitted through head to head contact with an infested person or through contact with personal objects (e.g., combs, hats, etc.).

- If you suspect that your child has head lice, we ask that you let us know as soon as possible. Check your child's hair thoroughly. If live lice or nits (eggs) are found, administer a treatment, (available over-the-counter at your Pharmacy or through a service). Once treatment is administered it is essential that you remove all nits since the products may not kill all of them.

The child should not return to the child care center until a treatment has been applied as per the product instructions. Parents are also advised to continue to check their child's hair – and that of all family members – daily for 14 days to minimize the spread.

- If an educator suspects head lice, they may contact you to request permission to check your child's hair in a private location and report their findings to you. If live lice or nits are found, your child will not be excluded from the program – as the trauma of being separated could be more harmful than the physical problems related to head lice. The educator may request an early pick up so that treatment can begin immediately.

Fever Policy

To help protect the health and well-being of all children, families, and staff, children who have a fever must remain at home for at least 24 hours symptom free, and should not attend Play, Learn, Grow Academy.

A child who develops a fever while at the centre the parent/guardian or authorized emergency contact will be contacted to arrange for the child to be picked up as soon as possible.

Children may return to the centre only after they have been fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication (such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen) and are well enough to participate fully in all program activities, including outdoor play.

If a child's fever is accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, persistent cough, rash, difficulty breathing, or any signs of a communicable illness, additional exclusion periods or medical clearance may be required in accordance with Public Health recommendations.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy reserves the right to request that a child remain at home if they are unable to comfortably participate in the daily program or if their illness poses a risk to the health and safety of others.

Gastroenteritis (Gastro)

To help prevent the spread of illness and protect the health and well-being of all children and staff, Play, Learn, Grow Academy follows exclusion guidelines for children experiencing symptoms of gastroenteritis.

If a child develops two or more symptoms of gastroenteritis while in care, they will be required to be picked up by their parent/guardian or authorized emergency contact and remain home for 48 hours symptom free and without the use of medication

Symptoms may include:

- One episode of vomiting and one episode of diarrhea;
- Two episodes of vomiting; or
- Two episodes of diarrhea.

If a child experiences two or more gastro symptoms within a 24-hour period while attending the centre, the child will be required to remain at home and may return only after they have been symptom-free for a minimum of 48 hours without the use of medication.

Children must be able to participate comfortably in the regular child care program, including meals, rest periods, and outdoor play, before returning to care.

Families are asked to notify Play, Learn, Grow Academy if their child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness or has experienced gastro symptoms while at home so that appropriate cleaning, monitoring, and communication procedures can be followed.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy reserves the right to request that a child remain home if they are showing symptoms of illness or are unable to participate safely and comfortably in the program.

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) Policy

Pink eye (conjunctivitis) can be caused by bacteria, viruses, allergies, or other irritants and may spread easily through contact with eye discharge and contaminated hands or surfaces.

If a child develops signs or symptoms of pink eye while attending the centre, including:

- Redness or swelling of the eye;
- Increased tearing;
- Yellow or green discharge from the eye;
- Eyelids that are stuck together or crusted, especially after sleeping;
- Eye discomfort, irritation, or rubbing of the eyes;

The child may be assessed by an educator and the Supervisor. If symptoms are significant and the child is unable to comfortably participate in the daily program, the parent/guardian will be contacted and may be required to pick up their child.

Children may return to care when:

- They do not have excessive eye discharge requiring frequent cleaning;
- Have had a minimum of 2 doses of eye drops treatment instructions and
- Symptoms are improving or have been assessed by a health care provider if required.

If a child has been diagnosed with bacterial conjunctivitis and medication has been prescribed, parents/guardians must follow the treatment instructions provided by their health care provider.

The centre may consult with the local Public Health Unit for guidance during outbreaks or when multiple cases occur.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFM) Policy

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFM) is a common viral illness that can spread easily among young children through contact with saliva, respiratory secretions, stool, and fluid from blisters.

Symptoms may include:

- Fever;
- Reduced appetite;
- Sore throat;
- Irritability or tiredness;
- Small red spots or blisters on the hands, feet, mouth, diaper area, or other areas of the body;
- Mouth sores that may cause discomfort or increased drooling.

Exclusion from Care

If a child develops symptoms of HFM while attending Play, Learn, Grow Academy, the child will be monitored and the parent/guardian will be contacted and will be required to pick up the child.

A child may be required to remain at home if they:

- Have a fever and are not able to participate in daily activities;
- Are experiencing significant discomfort;
- Have excessive drooling due to mouth sores that cannot be reasonably managed in the program;
- Have open, weeping blisters that cannot be covered or managed appropriately;
- Require more care than educators can provide while maintaining supervision of the other children.

Returning to Care

Children may return to Play, Learn, Grow Academy when:

- They are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication;
- They are feeling well enough to participate in all regular program activities, including outdoor play;
- Mouth sores, drooling, or other symptoms are fully scabbed over or
- Have been cleared with a doctor's note
- Children may still have visible marks or healing spots after they are well enough to return. The presence of a rash alone does not always require exclusion if the child is comfortable and are able to participate.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are asked to:

- Notify the center if their child has been diagnosed with HFM;
- Keep children home until all sores have been completely healed
- Monitor symptoms and follow health care provider recommendations;
- Inform the center of any changes to their child's health status.

Nutrition

Play, Learn, Grow Academy provides a healthy morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack at the center. All of our food will be catered from Wholesome Kids Catering, Our certified food handler will record all temperatures of hazardous foods in a logbook prior to serving. Weekly menus are developed in consultation with Canada's Food Guide to promote Healthy Eating and will be posted in the child-care center to assist parents in planning meals at home.

Due to severe allergies, Play, Learn, Grow Academy is designated as Allergy Safe. Educators, in partnership with parents, do their utmost to ensure children with allergies are kept safe. Allergy lists are posted in each classroom, food preparation areas and serving areas.

Food from Home

Due to the risk of cross contamination, we ask that you do not bring food from home into the center. If your child is arriving in the morning and is still having snack, please finish it in the car. The educators will offer them Play, Learn, Grow Academy's morning snack upon arrival.

On your child's birthday, if you wish to share something with the children, you are encouraged to consider food alternatives such as a special craft, stickers or pencils. If a food treat is your preference, speak to the center supervisor first so we can consider any allergies in your child's room and center. Should an exception to our "no food from home" policy be made, please note that food sent in, must be store bought, have an ingredients label and not contain nuts or a warning that it may have come in contact with nuts.

Food Substitutions

If your child has food allergies, sensitivities or restrictions, please speak to the center supervisor about a Food Agreement and/or providing food substitutions. Terms and conditions apply.

Policies & Continuous Improvement

- Play, Learn, Grow Academy has developed comprehensive policies and procedures to ensure compliance with all applicable legislation, including child care licensing, health and safety, accessibility, emergency management, and public health requirements.
- All educators review center policies annually and participate in ongoing professional development and training throughout the year to maintain best practices and provide the highest quality of care.

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS, COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

- Play, Learn, Grow Academy have an open door policy with parents.
- Parents are regularly invited to the program to attend events, read stories or share their expertise.
- Educators make an effort to get to know children and their families-respecting the parent's role as the first teacher, as well as their beliefs and values.
- Educators are respectful when sharing incidents where a child requires assistance to be successful in the program.
- Educators actively listen to children and respond in a positive way. They will support every child's need to self-regulate, and assist them as they work to develop that skill.
- Educators provide support to parents by answering questions about their child/ren's development, and goals for their children.
- Annually, a member survey is conducted to seek feedback from parents to help us better understand their values and needs. A suggestion/comments box is also available.
- Centre Activities (ie: Spring and Holiday Concert, Family Barbeque Night, etc) are planned to encourage relationship building and connections between children, families and educators.
- University, and College students who are completing placement in our classrooms may ask parents to sign a permission form to exchange information that allows Play, Learn, Grow Academy and the School/ outside resource agencies to speak about your child/ren's development and learning needs.
- Educators often invite community partners into the program for children's further learning and development

SENSE OF SELF

- Educators support children in documenting their own learning when possible.
- Educators are beginning to develop children's portfolios—a collection of photos and documentation that demonstrates your child's learning.
- Educators will ask parents and children over 6 years of age to sign a Behaviour Code. This document outlines expectations of children, staff, and families' appropriate behaviour to develop positive relationships.
- Children are invited to help plan for and lead their own learning through inquiry- based learning Children are free to express ideas and explore their curiosity.
- The environment is set up to meet the children's individual needs and allow them explore, reflect and engage in their own learning. Provocations are introduced to engage the children and educator's in a co-learning experience where we use scaffolding based on the child's input (e.g. non-verbal cues, own experiences, and expressive ideas)
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy seeks input from the children through polls, discussions and observations about the activities, materials, and equipment they want in their program.
- Pedagogical documentation is used to display the children's thoughts, feelings, ideas, and views of how things around them relate and connect to their world. We provide children to revisit and share their learning with others.
- Educators record actual activities and reflect back on their observations.
- We share children's forms of self-expression in learning stories as well as through our Facebook page accompanied with appropriate permission forms.
- Educators engage children in meaningful conversations about feelings, empathy, appropriate behaviour, and making positive choices to support the development of self-regulation, emotional awareness, and social skills
- Educators recognize and acknowledge children's positive efforts, accomplishments, and acts of kindness, fostering confidence and a positive sense of self.
- Educators model respectful conflict resolution strategies when interacting with children, families, and colleagues, helping children develop positive social skills and problem-solving abilities.
Educators model effective communication by maintaining eye contact, speaking at the child's level, actively listening, and using respectful, age-appropriate language.
- Educators support children's self-confidence by encouraging safe, age-appropriate risk-taking, celebrating their achievements, and recognizing their individual strengths and abilities.
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy promotes children's emotional well-being by incorporating self-regulation strategies throughout the daily program, helping children identify, express, and manage their emotions in healthy ways.
- Educators use pedagogical documentation and project display boards to celebrate children's learning, reflect on their experiences, and encourage continued curiosity and growth.
- Each child is provided with a designated space to store their personal belongings, which is easily accessible to promote independence and responsibility.

EXPLORE, PLAY AND INQUIRE

- Our daily schedule is flexible with much time devoted to child-initiated, play-based learning. The schedule includes two hours of outdoor time. During inclement weather, educators provide engaging indoor gross motor activities to ensure children remain active.
- Our classrooms offer a variety of inviting learning centres, including blocks and construction, sensory play, dramatic play, art, literacy, science, music, and more. These learning areas are accessible throughout the day, allowing children to explore independently and follow their interests.
- Educators actively participate in children's play by asking open-ended questions, listening to children's ideas, extending their thinking, and acting as co-learners. Technology may be incorporated, when appropriate, to enhance research, inquiry, and learning experiences.
- Loose parts (such as tubes, wooden pieces, fabric, natural materials, buttons, and other open-ended resources) are incorporated into the learning environment to encourage creativity, problem-solving, and imaginative play. Families are welcome to contribute safe, natural materials that may support children's learning experiences.
- All children are provided with a daily rest period.
- Educators carefully observe children's play, interests, strengths, and emerging skills to plan meaningful experiences that encourage exploration, inquiry, creativity, and continued learning.
- Learning experiences are planned to promote critical thinking, problem-solving, investigation, collaboration, and research-based learning through projects that reflect children's interests and curiosities.
- During the enrolment process, families are invited to share information about their child's developmental milestones, interests, strengths, preferences, routines, and any additional information that will help educators provide individualized care and support.
- Each classroom includes a quiet, comfortable space where children can read, relax, regulate their emotions, or enjoy a peaceful break when needed.
- Educators recognize and value each child's unique abilities, strengths, culture, and learning style. When appropriate, they collaborate with families and community professionals to adapt the learning environment and program to support each child's individual needs.
- Play, Learn, Grow Academy is committed to creating an inclusive environment where every child experiences a sense of belonging, meaningful participation, and respect. Our policies, practices, and learning environments are designed to support diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion for all children and families.

Our Professional Team

At Play, Learn, Grow Academy, our educators are committed to maintaining the highest standards of early learning and child care. We believe that ongoing professional development empowers our Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), Early Childhood Assistants (ECAs), and all staff with current knowledge, best practices, and innovative approaches that enhance the quality of care and education provided to children and families.

To ensure the safety and well-being of every child, our educators maintain the following qualifications and requirements:

- Proof of qualifications and credentials, including registration with the College of Early Childhood Educators (where applicable).
- A current health assessment and immunization record, as required.
- A clear and current Vulnerable Sector Check.
- Written acknowledgement and annual review of all legislated requirements and Play, Learn, Grow Academy's policies and procedures.
- Valid Standard First Aid and CPR Level C certification.
- Ongoing professional development through workshops, conferences, training sessions, and continuous learning opportunities.
- Participation in annual policy reviews and regular professional learning to ensure compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) and current best practices.
- Participation in regular staff meetings, collaborative planning, and reflective practice to continuously improve the quality of our program.

Our commitment to continuous learning ensures that children receive high-quality care in a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment while families can feel confident that their children are supported by knowledgeable and dedicated professionals.

SUPPORT FOR STAFF

- Play, Learn, Grow Academy values lifelong learning and recognizes educators who complete 20 or more hours of professional development annually. This achievement is celebrated and acknowledged within the centre.
- to support continuous learning and enhance the quality of our program, the centre will close for two Professional Development (PD) Days each year. These dedicated training days provide educators with opportunities to participate in professional learning, collaborate as a team, review best practices, and strengthen the quality of care and education provided to children and families. Families will be provided with advance notice of the scheduled closure dates.
- Each classroom is equipped with a tablet that educators use to document children's learning and update each child's daily report through the Brightwheel app. Tablets may also be used to support age-appropriate research and inquiry with children during classroom projects.
- Educators have access to a computer in the staff room to support lesson planning, professional learning, documentation, and research.
- The Ministry of Education conducts regular licensing inspections to ensure our centre continues to meet the requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA). These visits may include observations, documentation reviews, and coaching to support continuous quality improvement.
- The Administrator responds promptly to concerns or questions raised by staff, children, or families and works collaboratively with all parties to resolve concerns in a respectful and timely manner.
- Educators are encouraged to share new knowledge, resources, and best practices with colleagues and families after attending professional development workshops, conferences, or training sessions.
- Throughout the year, educators participate in regular staff meetings, professional learning opportunities, and team-building activities to strengthen collaboration and enhance the quality of our program.
- The Administrator publishes a quarterly staff newsletter to promote ongoing communication, share resources, celebrate successes, and provide mentorship and inspiration related to pedagogy, reflective practice, and continuous improvement.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is licensed by the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA).

ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

At Play, Learn, Grow Academy, our leadership team is committed to supporting educators in providing high-quality, play-based early learning experiences that foster each child's growth, development, and overall well-being. Through ongoing mentorship, collaboration, and reflective practice, our administration team works alongside educators to ensure children receive the highest standard of care and education.

The administration team supports educators through:

- Ongoing program evaluation to ensure our curriculum reflects children's interests, strengths, and developmental needs.
- Regular performance monitoring, coaching, and mentoring to promote professional growth and continuous quality improvement.
- Documentation review, reflective practice, and annual program reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of our policies, procedures, and educational approaches.
- Ongoing support in implementing Ontario's How Does Learning Happen? Framework and the requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA).

Our Program Statement Implementation Policy outlines the procedures and expectations for ensuring the philosophy, goals, and approaches described in our Program Statement are consistently reflected in daily practice. This includes ensuring that our image of the child as competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential is evident throughout our learning environments, interactions, and programming.

Responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Program Statement rests with the Centre Supervisor. The Centre Supervisor oversees compliance through regular observations, documentation reviews, staff coaching and mentoring, reflective practice, and ongoing program evaluation to ensure continuous quality improvement and adherence to all applicable legislative requirements and Play, Learn, Grow Academy's policies and procedures.

ENROLMENT

Families interested in enrolling their child at Play, Learn, Grow Academy are required to schedule an appointment for an initial tour of the centre. During this visit, families will have the opportunity to explore the facility, meet educators, review the enrolment process, and discuss the required documentation. Children are encouraged to attend the tour with their parent(s) or guardian(s) to begin becoming familiar with the environment, educators, and classroom setting.

To support a positive transition into the program, families are encouraged to schedule one or more pre-entry visits before their child's official start date. These visits help children become comfortable with their new surroundings, build trusting relationships with educators, and ease the transition into child care.

Before a child can begin attending the centre, all required enrolment forms, supporting documentation, and applicable fees must be completed, signed, and submitted. These requirements are in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and its regulations.

Required Enrolment Documentation

The following must be received prior to your child's first day of care:

- A \$150.00 non-refundable deposit; which will be applied toward your child's last month of enrolment as outlined in the center's payment policies.
- A completed and signed Application for Enrolment Form.
- A current and up-to-date Immunization Record, or valid exemption documentation as permitted under applicable legislation.
- A signed Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form, confirming that the parent(s)/guardian(s) have read and understand the center's policies and procedures.
- A signed Payment Policy Acknowledgement Form.
- Any additional forms required by the center, including emergency contact information, authorized pick-up information, medical or allergy forms, and consent forms, where applicable.

All required documentation must be received, reviewed, and approved before a child's first day of attendance. This process helps ensure the health, safety, and well-being of every child while allowing educators to prepare for a successful transition into the program.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive environment where every child and family feels valued from the very beginning of their child care journey.

CWELCC

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System. Eligible parent fees are charged in accordance with applicable CWELCC requirements and the centre's approved fee structure.

FEE SCHEDULE

<u>Toddler Room</u> Ages 1.5-2.5 year	<u>Preschool Room</u> Ages 2.5-4 years
\$22.00/ Day	\$22.00/Day
Full time & Part-time (3-5 Days) Availability	

Tuition Fees

Tuition fees support the delivery of high-quality care, learning experiences, nutritious meals and snacks (where applicable), educational materials, and a safe, nurturing environment for all children enrolled at Play, Learn, Grow Academy.

Tuition is based on the centre's current fee schedule and your child's agreed-upon schedule of attendance as outlined in the Parent Contract.

Families may choose one of the following payment options:

- One monthly payment, processed through the Brightwheel app using the authorized payment method at the end of each month; or
- Two equal bi-weekly payments, processed through Brightwheel in advance, by Friday evening for the following two weeks of care

Tuition fees are charged based on your child's enrolled space rather than attendance.

Timely payment ensures the continued operation of the program and allows us to maintain consistent staffing and resources.

If tuition fees remain unpaid for two consecutive weeks, your child's enrolment may be suspended until the outstanding balance has been paid in full. Families experiencing financial difficulties are encouraged to contact the Centre Director as soon as possible to discuss their circumstances.

Full payment is required during, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- Child absences due to illness or injury.
- Family vacations or personal days.
- Statutory holidays.
- Professional Development (PD) days or scheduled centre closures.
- Inclement weather or emergency closures where required by government authorities or public health.
- Temporary exclusions due to illness in accordance with the centre's health policies.
- Any other absence where your child's space continues to be reserved.

Tuition will continue to be charged until the required written notice of withdrawal has been received and the notice period has been fulfilled. Failure to attend the program does not relieve parents/guardians of their financial obligations under the Child Care Contract.

Occasional daily care may be available based on space and staffing ratios. Daily rates apply and are subject to availability.

Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child from the program are required to provide 60 days' written notice. If sufficient notice is not provided, tuition fees will remain payable for the required notice period. Any outstanding fees must be paid in full before the child's final day of attendance.

Refunds and Credits

- Refunds are not provided
- Credits are provided when an overpayment is made. This will be applied to the following months tuition
- Deposits are applied to the final month's tuition with 60 days written notice
- Field-trip cancellations are credited, and will be applied to the new scheduled date
- Centre closures are not credited or refunded

Child Care Late Tuition Fee

Prompt payment of tuition fees is essential to ensure that Play, Learn, Grow Academy can continue to provide high-quality care and maintain its daily operations.

Tuition fees are due according to the payment schedule outlined in your Child Care Contract. Payments not received in full by 6:00 p.m. on Friday will be considered overdue. A late payment fee of \$15.00 per day, including weekends and statutory holidays, will be applied to the outstanding balance until payment has been received in full.

If tuition fees remain unpaid or underpaid for two consecutive weeks, Play, Learn, Grow Academy reserves the right to suspend child care services until the outstanding balance has been paid in full. Continued non-payment may result in the termination of child care services.

As outlined in the Play, Learn, Grow Academy Child Care Contract, a non-refundable security deposit of \$150.00 is required to secure your child's space. This deposit will be applied to your final tuition payment, provided all account obligations have been met and the required notice of withdrawal has been given.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Hours of Operation & Closures

Play, Learn, Grow Academy Child Care provides care Monday to Friday, opening at 6:30 a.m. and closes at 6:00 p.m.

Parking spaces are available on the right front side of the church.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy will be closed during the following public holidays:

- Labor Day -September 7th 2026
- PD Day for Staff- October 9th 2026
- Thanksgiving – October 12th 2026
- Christmas Break- December 24th - 31st 2026
- New Year's Day-January 1st 2027
- Family Day- February 15th 2027
- Good Friday- March 26th 2027
- Easter Monday- March 29th 2027
- PD Day for Staff- May 21st 2027
- Victoria Day- May 24th 2027
- Canada Day- July 1st 2027
- Civic Holiday- August 2nd 2027

Additional Days:

- Professional Development-October 9th 2026
- Professional Development May 21st 2026

Emergency Closure Policy

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is committed to having our programs open on all scheduled days. We recognize that emergencies beyond the Centre's control such as the breakdown of essential services (hydro, heat and/or water) or inclement weather days can occur. We must consider the safety of all students and staff when we make decisions regarding full day closures or early closures due to emergency conditions.

In the event that Play, Learn, Grow Academy will need to close the centre due to any emergency condition the staff will call or email families for an early pick up. Should Play, Learn, Grow Academy be unable to open our program in the morning, a message will be sent on Brightwheel to all families. Parents are asked to call in to the centre on severe weather days to confirm that Play, Learn, Grow Academy is open.

Closure due to Health & Safety or other circumstances:

- Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Centre may be required to close for health or safety reasons (i.e. Illness outbreak, fire, flood, etc.)

Closure due to weather conditions:

- If the School Board determines that the schools must close early due to severe weather conditions, the Centre will advise parents to make arrangements to pick-up their child(ren) earlier than usual. If a trip has been scheduled for the day and is cancelled due to weather, the trip portion will be credited to families.

General Guidelines for Centre Closures:

- Under any of the above circumstances, if closure of the childcare center is expected to exceed five working days, every effort will be made to move the center to an alternate suitable location, based on Ministry of Education and the local municipal government approval.
- All decisions regarding center closure will be made at the discretion of the Executive Director and Supervisor taking into consideration the safety and health of the children. This will be communicated to parents with as much notice as possible.

UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, THE FEES WILL NOT BE REFUNDED DUE TO CENTRE CLOSURES RESULTING FROM CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND THE CENTRE'S CONTROL.

Waitlist Policy

Play, Learn, Grow Academy will make every reasonable effort to accommodate all requests for child care enrolment.

When a program has reached its licensed capacity and no spaces are available, families may request to have their child placed on the centre's waiting list. The waiting list will be managed in accordance with the procedures outlined below and in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA).

There is no fee to place a child on the waiting list or to remain on the waiting list.

Spaces will be offered as they become available, taking into consideration factors such as the child's age, the availability of an appropriate space, licensing requirements, and the date the completed waiting list request was received. The centre reserves the right to prioritize enrolment where required by legislation or to support operational needs, including sibling placement or transitions between age groups.

Families on the waiting list are encouraged to notify the centre of any changes to their contact information or child care needs. Play, Learn, Grow Academy may periodically contact families to confirm their continued interest in remaining on the waiting list. If a family does not respond within the timeframe provided, the centre may remove the child's name from the waiting list.

The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that is fair, transparent, and consistent with Ontario licensing requirements.

Waiting List Procedures

Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List

1. The Supervisor or designate will receive requests from parents/guardians who wish to place their child on the waiting list. Requests may be submitted through telephone communication, an in-person meeting, or the center's online application process.

Placing a Child on the Waiting List

1. The Licensee, Supervisor, or designate will add children to the waiting list in chronological order based on the date and time the completed request was received.
2. Once a child has been added to the waiting list, the parent/guardian will be informed of their child's current position on the list.

Determining Placement Priority When a Space Becomes Available

1. When a space becomes available within a program, priority will be given in the following order:
 - Children currently enrolled in the center who require a transition to the next age grouping;
 - Siblings of children currently enrolled in the program;
 - Other children on the waiting list, based on program availability, licensing requirements, and the chronological order in which their request was received.
2. Placement decisions will be based on available spaces, classroom age groupings, staffing requirements, and licensed capacity requirements.

Offering an Available Space

1. When a space becomes available, parents/guardians of eligible children on the waiting list will be contacted by telephone and email with an offer of enrolment.
2. Parents/guardians will be provided **with** five (5) business days to respond to the offer.
3. If a parent/guardian does not respond within the required timeframe, the Licensee, Supervisor, or designate may proceed to offer the available space to the next child on the waiting list.
4. If a family declines an offered space, their request may remain on the waiting list if they wish to continue being considered for future openings.

Responding to Parent/Guardian Inquiries Regarding Waiting List Status

1. The Supervisor or designate will serve as the primary contact for families requesting updates regarding their child's placement on the waiting list.
2. The Supervisor or designate will respond to inquiries by providing the child's current position on the waiting list and, where possible, an estimated timeframe or likelihood of receiving an offer of placement.
3. Families understand that estimated timelines are not guaranteed and may change based on enrolment patterns, withdrawals, transitions, and available spaces.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

1. The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of all children and families.
2. Parents/guardians will only be provided with information regarding their own child's placement on the waiting list.
3. The names, personal information, or placement details of other children and families on the waiting list will not be shared with unauthorized individuals.

Children's Arrival and Departure

It is essential that educators are aware of when your child arrives and departs from the centre. All children must be signed in and out on the centre's attendance records by a parent/guardian or authorized adult. Please ensure you greet an educator upon arrival so that your child's attendance can be accurately recorded.

Children must arrive at the centre no later than 9:30 a.m. each day unless prior arrangements have been made with the Supervisor or designate. This allows educators to maintain consistent routines, participate in planned learning experiences, and ensure appropriate staffing and supervision throughout the day.

To support children's safety, supervision, and classroom routines, parents/guardians are asked to refrain from entering classrooms or childcare program areas during drop-off and pick-up times. All arrivals and departures must take place at the designated entrance or outside gate area. An educator will greet your child upon arrival and assist with the transition into the program.

Please note that children will only be released to individuals listed on your child's Authorized Pick-Up List. Parents/guardians may update this list at any time by providing written notification to the centre.

Individuals who are picking up a child for the first time, or who are not known to the educator, will be required to provide valid photo identification before the child can be released.

Late Pick up Policy

Play, Learn, Grow Academy closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Families are expected to ensure that their child is picked up by closing time. If an unforeseen circumstance will result in a late pick-up, parents/guardians are asked to notify the centre as soon as possible.

A late pick-up fee will be charged per child who remain in care after 6:00 p.m. The fee is intended to compensate the educator who is required to remain at the centre beyond scheduled operating hours.

The late pick-up fee is as follows:

- \$20.00 for the first 10 minutes after 6:00 p.m.
- \$2.00 per minute for every additional minute thereafter.

The late pick-up fee is payable directly to the educator (by cash) who remains with your child at the time of pick-up and is due immediately upon arrival unless other arrangements have been approved by the Supervisor.

Families with children picked up after the 6:00 p.m. closing time will be tracked and can expect the following:

- **First Late Pick-Up:** A reminder by telephone, email, or in person from the Supervisor regarding the center's hours of operation and late pick-up policy.
- **Second Late Pick-Up:** A formal written warning issued by the Supervisor.
- **Third Late Pick-Up:** Continued late pick-ups may result in the termination of child care services at the discretion of Play, Learn, Grow Academy.

If a child remains at the centre past 6:30 p.m. and the centre has been unable to contact the parent/guardian or any of the authorized emergency contacts, Play, Learn, Grow Academy will contact the appropriate Family and Children's Services agency in accordance with the centre's policies and legal responsibilities.

We appreciate families making every effort to arrive on time, as this supports the well-being of children and respects the scheduled working hours of our educators.

Releasing a Child without Supervision

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is committed to ensuring the safety of every child in our care.

Children will only be released to their parent/guardian or another authorized adult identified on the child's Authorized Pick-Up List. Under no circumstances will a child be dismissed from the centre to walk home or leave the premises without adult supervision.

Any exception to this policy must comply with applicable legislation and be approved by the Supervisor. Written authorization from a parent/guardian alone does not guarantee approval for a child to leave the centre without adult supervision.

Communication & Participation

At Play, Learn, Grow Academy, we believe that parents/guardians play a vital role in child development. You are your child's first teacher. Educators value the partnership they build with the whole family. Parents are encouraged to share their skills and talents as a special guest or topic expert, to share their culture and to engage in dialogue about their child's development. Educators provide a daily log via Brightwheel for toddler and preschool families. Families of children in our kindergarten program will receive a personalized learning story at least once per month. In all programs, educators will post documentation of the children's learning for you to see and explore on your own and with your child.

Twice per year (in May and November), educators will provide a more formal update on your child's development. Parents are encouraged to share their own observations of their child's behaviour and development with the RECE and may request a parent/teacher interview at any time.

Annually, in the spring, Play, Learn, Grow Academy conducts a Satisfaction Survey with all families to seek valuable feedback as part of our continuous improvement plan.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the childcare licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each childcare center it operates (i.e. the operator).

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Policy

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

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

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within three (3) business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Parent Issues and Concerns

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the director.

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

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

Contacts:

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

Supervisors: Dara Hewa (RECE) & Adeena Harripaul (RECE) at (705) 434-0369 or Email: supervisorplga@gmail.com

Children's Aid Society :705.435.4348

Child Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Prevention Policy

Play, Learn, Grow Academy is committed to providing a safe, respectful, nurturing, and inclusive environment where every child is protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and any other form of harm.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), Ontario Regulation 137/15, and the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA).

All employees, students, volunteers, contractors, and any other adults present in the child care centre are required to comply with this policy.

Policy Statement

Play, Learn, Grow Academy has **zero tolerance** for:

- Sexual abuse of a child.
- Sexual misconduct involving a child.
- Engaging in any prescribed sexual act involving a child.
- Grooming behaviours.
- Sexual exploitation.

- Inappropriate physical contact.
- Sexual comments, jokes, gestures, or conversations directed toward or in the presence of children.
- Taking, possessing, sharing, or requesting inappropriate photographs or videos of children.
- Any behaviour that violates professional boundaries or places a child at risk.

These behaviours are prohibited under Ontario legislation and are grounds for immediate removal from duties while concerns are investigated.

Professional Boundaries

All educators, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children at all times

Staff shall:

- treat every child with dignity and respect;
- use only developmentally appropriate physical contact necessary for care, comfort, health, hygiene, or safety;
- ensure interactions remain observable whenever possible;
- respect children's privacy during toileting and diapering while maintaining appropriate supervision;
- use positive guidance techniques;
- Immediately report any concerns regarding inappropriate conduct.

Staff shall never:

- be alone with a child in an area where they cannot be observed;
- engage in secretive behaviour;
- request secrecy from a child;
- communicate with children through personal social media accounts;
- exchange personal gifts with individual children;
- photograph children using personal devices;
- Discuss sexual topics that are not age or developmentally appropriate.

Staff Screening

Prior to employment, all staff, students, and volunteers must:

- complete the required Vulnerable Sector Check;
- meet all CCEYA screening requirements;
- participate in orientation on child protection policies;
- review prohibited practices annually;
- Complete all mandatory training required by the center

Supervision Practices

Play, Learn, Grow Academy will reduce opportunities for abuse by:

- maintaining required staff-to-child ratios;
- actively supervising children at all times;
- ensuring classrooms remain visible whenever possible;
- limiting situations where one adult is isolated with one child;
- monitoring washroom and diapering routines;
- Ensuring visitors are supervised while in the center.

Duty to Report

Every person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is in need of protection has an individual legal duty to immediately report those concerns directly to the local Children's Aid Society (CAS).

This duty:

- cannot be delegated to another person;
- applies even if the information is confidential;
- Applies regardless of whether a supervisor has already made a report.

Responding to Allegations

If an allegation or suspicion of sexual abuse or sexual misconduct involves:

- an employee;
- a student;
- a volunteer;
- a contractor; or
- any other adult associated with the center,

The Supervisor or Licensee will:

1. ensure the immediate safety of all children;
2. remove the individual from direct contact with children where appropriate;
3. immediately report concerns to the Children's Aid Society;
4. contact police when required;
5. report the incident as a Serious Occurrence where required under the CCEYA;
6. cooperate fully with all investigations;
7. Maintain confidentiality throughout the process.

No internal investigation will interfere with a CAS or police investigation.

Parent Communication

Where permitted by law and direction from investigating authorities, families will be informed of incidents affecting the health and safety of children through the Serious Occurrence Notification process.

Confidential information regarding individuals involved will not be disclosed.

Training

All staff will receive training:

- upon hire;
- PD days;
- annually thereafter;
- Whenever legislation or center policies are updated.

Training will include:

- recognizing signs of abuse;
- professional boundaries;
- grooming behaviours;
- duty to report obligations;
- prohibited practices;
- Documentation procedures.

Documentation

All concerns, observations, disclosures, reports, and actions taken will be documented accurately, objectively, and confidentially. Documentation will be retained according to legislative record retention requirements.

Annual Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and whenever legislative or regulatory requirements change.

All staff, students, and volunteers must acknowledge in writing that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this policy.

Confidentiality

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

Conduct

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

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

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the ***Child and Family Services Act***.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

Collection of Personal Information

Upon enrolment, you will be provided with a copy of Play, Learn, Grow Academy's Privacy Statement to inform you about Play, Learn, Grow Academy's practices related to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information which may be collected by us through participation in our programs. The Privacy Statement is in compliance with Canada's Personal Information Protection and Electronics Documents Act (PIPEDA).

As a parent/guardian, you may have access to review your child's file in the presence of a Play, Learn, Grow Academy employee. You may also submit a Request for Access & Release of Personal Information should you require records or a letter regarding your child's development or program participation.

Image Release

In the course of our program, photos, videos and other forms of documentation are collected and used. Upon enrolment you will be asked to review and sign an Image Release. This outlines your options for consent for Play, Learn, Grow Academy to use such images internally within the program or externally for marketing, including photos we share on Facebook about the children's activities. You may change your consent at any time.

Injury & Incident Reporting

In spite of effective supervision practices and all the best precautions, an incident or injury may still occur. When minor incidents (e.g., scrapes, bumps, behavioural concerns) do occur, the educators will reassure the child, provide first aid if needed and complete an Incident Report. These reports explain the incident in detail. You will be asked to review it upon pick up and to sign the report by acknowledging Play, Learn, Grow Academy its receipt. A copy may be provided or emailed to you. If medical attention is required, the educators will consult with you and/or call for emergency services as needed.

If you take your child to see a medical professional (e.g., doctor, dentist) in response to an incident that occurred at Play, Learn, Grow Academy, please follow up with the center supervisor to confirm the details of that visit and any medical treatment provided. The Incident Report may need to be updated and the supervisor can inform the educators of any recommendations or accommodations required for a safe return to the program. If a head injury occurs, parents will be notified immediately via Brightwheel and a phone call by the center supervisor.

Emergency Management

Play, Learn, Grow Academy has a policy on unexpected center closures. In adverse weather conditions, parents are advised to listen to local radio stations and monitor Play, Learn, Grow Academy's website, Facebook page or messages from Brightwheel for notices of an unexpected center closure. Should a closure be necessary mid-day, educators will contact parents by Brightwheel and/or by phone to notify them of the early closure and request pick up.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy's educators are trained in emergency preparedness and response in relation to fire, tornado and lock down procedures. Throughout the year, children and educators will participate in fire, lock-down and tornado drills and discuss our procedures. Play, Learn, Grow Academy has a designed gathering area to use during an emergency evacuation. An attendance check and head count is conducted by the educators to confirm that all children and staff are accounted for.

Should an emergency situation arise that requires the children and staff to vacate the building

for a longer period of time, it may be necessary for the group to move to the designated emergency shelter. Once children have been reassured and settled, educators will contact parents by phone to advise of the need for an early pick up and advise of the location. Additional communication and updates may be provided by email from the center or Play, Learn, Grow Academy's administration office.

During ongoing emergency situations (e.g., lock down, tornado), Play, Learn, Grow Academy will make every effort to provide timely communication with parents via phone and/or email. Parents are advised to limit phone calls to the center during an ongoing emergency situation to leave lines open for emergency personnel. An alternate number may be provided to support communication during such situations.

Prevention unauthorized individuals from entering the center

Play Learn Grow Academy believes that safety is our number one priority. To help ensure the safety and security of all children, families, and staff, our childcare facility uses authorized key fobs to control access to the centre.

Only authorized parents, guardians, and staff members are provided with key fobs that allow them to enter the facility. This system helps prevent unauthorized individuals from entering the centre and supports a safe and secure environment for everyone.

All visitors must sign in at the office upon arrival and complete the Visitors Log. Visitors are required to provide the necessary information and follow the centre's visitor procedures while on the premises. Visitors must also sign out when leaving the centre.

Parents and guardians are reminded not to share their key fob or allow unauthorized individuals to enter the centre using their access.

What to Bring to Child Care

To help ensure your child is comfortable and prepared for each day, families are asked to provide the following items.

- Change of Clothing: at least three complete change of clothing (additional clothing may be requested for younger children who are toilet training)
- Rest Time Items: Families are welcome to bring a crib sheet/flat sheet, send a small comfort item, such as a favourite stuffed animal and/or blanket, to help their child feel secure during rest periods.
- Reusable water bottle
- Indoor shoes
- Appropriate Clothing and Footwear: Children should arrive each day dressed for active indoor and outdoor play and for the current weather conditions. Outdoor play takes place daily.
- Label Personal Belongings: All personal items, must be clearly labeled with your child's full name or initials.
- Diapers and Wipes: Parents/guardians are responsible for providing an adequate supply of diapers, pull-ups, wipes, and any diapering creams (where appropriate and accompanied by the required authorization forms). Families will be notified when supplies need replenishing.
- Wet Bag: Families are asked to provide a reusable waterproof or plastic bag to send home wet or soiled clothing for laundering.
- Please check your child's belongings regularly and replace clothing and supplies as needed throughout the year. If you have questions regarding program-specific requirements, please speak with the Centre Supervisor.

For safety reasons:

- Sandals worn outdoors must have a secure back strap.
- Running shoes or closed-toe shoes are required for playground climbing equipment, walks, and active play.
- Flip-flops, Crocs without the heel strap secured, and other loose-fitting footwear are discouraged during outdoor activities as they may pose a safety risk.

While every effort will be made to care for personal belongings, Play, Learn, Grow Academy is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

PROGRAM CHANGES

Program and Schedule Changes

Should you require a change in schedule for your child care needs, please speak to our center supervisor immediately.

Change or Add Days

The ability to switch days or to add days of care is subject to availability.

Decreasing Days

Please refer the notice requirements as listed below under Withdrawal of Child Care.

Withdrawal of Child Care

The following notice periods are required to withdraw from the program, including for families who have pre-enrolled but have not yet started:

- Toddler and Preschool programs require written notice of 60 days.

Termination of Child Care

Play, Learn, Grow Academy recognizes that a child care center is not always appropriate for all children. Many supports are put into place to create a happy and successful placement for all children. In cases of severe behaviour issues, it may be necessary to terminate the child care space. A decision to terminate a child's space will be made in consultation with parents. Play, Learn, Grow Academy's priority is for the safety of all children in its programs. Should the supervisor of the program, in consultation with the director, determine that a child cannot adjust to the program, or if the parent has not upheld the terms of the Child Care Contract, termination of services may occur.

The process of termination for all children will include any or all of the following steps:

Documentation of all incidents (filed)

- Meeting with appropriate parties
- Consultation with outside agencies
- Referral to an outside agency
- Suspension
- Removal from the program
- Notification to appropriate government agencies (e.g. Children's Services Consultants)

The safety of all children is our primary concern. The provision of our service is conditional upon the compliance of parents and children with our Code of Conduct outlined in the Child Care Contract.

If it is determined that we can no longer provide care, a signed, written notice of permanent withdrawal will be provided to a family one month in advance. However, behaviour that poses a safety hazard will not be accepted and may result in immediate termination of service.

Play, Learn, Grow Academy believes in providing and maintaining a work environment in which all employees are free from violence, threats of violence, intimidation, bullying, unkind comments and other disruptive behaviour or actions which belittle, threaten, offend, embarrass, humiliate or diminish another's self-esteem, whether deliberate or unintentional, including sexual harassment and discrimination. Such actions are not tolerated, will be addressed immediately and may result in the termination of child care spaces or other consequences (e.g., police contact).

Withdrawal Notice and Final Account Adjustment

Child care fees remain payable for the full duration of the required notice period, regardless of attendance. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring all outstanding fees are paid in accordance with the terms outlined in the Child Care Contract.

Any security deposit held on the account will be applied as a credit toward the final balance owing. Following this adjustment, any remaining amounts owing or additional credits will be calculated and processed accordingly.

Any outstanding balance remaining after the final account adjustment must be paid in full by the parent/guardian. Any eligible credit balance will be returned in accordance with the centre's payment policies.

Compliance with Centre Policies

Families are expected to comply with all policies, procedures, and requirements established by Play, Learn, Grow Academy, including but not limited to payment obligations, attendance expectations, health and safety requirements, and parent/guardian responsibilities.

Failure to comply with centre policies, including failure to maintain payment obligations as outlined in the Child Care Contract and Payment Policy, may result in the suspension or termination of the child's space in the child care program at the discretion of Play, Learn, Grow Academy.

The centre will make reasonable efforts to communicate concerns with families and provide an opportunity for resolution; however, the continued provision of child care services is dependent upon compliance with the terms and conditions of the Child Care Contract and centre policies.

Privacy and Documentation

All attendance records, communication with families, authorization forms, and Safe Arrival and Dismissal documentation will be maintained in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and applicable privacy legislation. Information regarding children and families will be kept confidential and shared only with individuals who are authorized to receive it.

Parent acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures

I have read the parent handbook for Play, Learn, Grow Academy and understand all the information, policies and procedures outlined in the handbook.

By signing this agreement I consent to all the handbook policies and procedures and agree to them, including payment policies and late fee procedures.

By signing this agreement I acknowledge that the information supplied in the registration form regarding our child (ren) and the information supplied below is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Supervisor name: _____

Supervisor signature: _____

Date: _____