



PARENT HANDBOOK

AWESOME BEGINNINGS CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL INC.

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Awesome Beginnings Cooperative Nursery School's (ABC) Parent Handbook. This handbook provides families with important information about our program, policies, procedures, fees, safety practices and family responsibilities.

ABC is a licensed child care centre operating under Ontario's Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and Ontario Regulation 137/15. The handbook is reviewed at least annually and is updated whenever information required by Ontario's child care licensing requirements changes. Parents can access the parent handbook on our website or will be given a copy if requested when their child starts care and whenever the handbook is modified.

Families are expected to review this handbook and acknowledge that they understand the policies and procedures that apply to the program. Questions or concerns may be directed to the educators, Supervisor or Board of Directors, as appropriate.

We are looking forward to a great year ahead and we are happy to have your child and your family as part of the ABC family.

History of ABC

The Awesome Beginnings Co-operative (ABC) Nursery School in Carlisle, ON, has been dedicated to educating children since 1978. It came into existence when a group of local mothers discovered that the applications they had sent to another school had been misplaced. These mothers joined forces and it was as a result of their efforts that the Strabane Co-operative Nursery School was formed. In September of 1998, the Nursery School moved from the basement of the Strabane United Church to the Carlisle Community Center. In June 2001, the Nursery School officially changed its name to Awesome Beginnings Co-operative Nursery School, also known as ABC Co-operative Nursery School. ABC Co-operative Nursery School is licensed annually through the Ministry of Education under the Child Care and Early Years Act.

Vision Statement

To provide the highest quality of early childhood programming in a safe, respectful, inclusive, and play-based environment that builds a foundation for life-long learning.

Mission Statement

To offer a nurturing and developmentally appropriate program that supports the social, cognitive, language and physical growth of the children. Staff, caregivers, and students develop meaningful relationships and learn, grow, play and discover together.

Program Statement

Awesome Beginnings Co-operative (ABC) Nursery School in Carlisle, Ontario, has been providing a caring and enriching early learning environment for children since 1978. We recognize that the early years are a significant period of growth and development and that children's experiences, relationships and environments have a lasting influence on their learning and well-being. At ABC, we view children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. We respect children as active participants in their own learning and recognize that each child brings unique strengths, interests, experiences, abilities and perspectives to our program.

Our program is supported by caring, experienced and knowledgeable educators who create an environment where children feel safe, valued, included and encouraged to explore. Through meaningful relationships, play, inquiry and hands-on experiences, educators support the social, emotional, physical, cognitive and communication development of each child.

Our program philosophy is grounded in **How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years**, the Ontario Ministry of Education's pedagogical framework for early years programs. The framework identifies four foundational conditions that support children's learning and development: **Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression**. These foundations guide our interactions with children, our relationships with families, our learning environments and the experiences we provide each day.

Belonging, Inclusion and Diversity

At ABC, we recognize and celebrate the uniqueness of every child and family. We strive to create an inclusive environment where every child feels a sense of belonging and knows that they are valued, respected and accepted for who they are.

Educators take the time to understand each child's family background, experiences, strengths, interests, needs, dispositions and ways of learning. We recognize that children develop at different rates and that there are many different pathways to learning and development. Our educators respond to these individual differences by providing experiences, materials and environments that are flexible and responsive to each child.

We promote respect, kindness, empathy, inclusion and acceptance of diverse abilities, cultures, family structures, languages, traditions and beliefs. Children are encouraged to learn about and appreciate the similarities and differences that make each person unique. We welcome families to share their cultures, languages, traditions and experiences with our program so that our learning environment reflects the diversity of our community.

Well-Being

We recognize that children's learning is closely connected to their physical, emotional and social well-being. At ABC, we create an environment where children feel secure, supported and comfortable expressing their thoughts, feelings and needs.

Educators build warm, responsive relationships with children and provide opportunities for children to develop confidence, independence, self-awareness and self-regulation. Through everyday interactions, routines, play and conversations, children are supported in developing skills for managing emotions, making choices, solving problems and developing positive relationships with others.

We recognize that children learn best when they feel safe, connected and respected. Our educators respond to children with patience, understanding and encouragement while providing appropriate guidance and support.

Relationships and Community

Positive, responsive relationships are at the heart of our program. We believe that children learn and develop through meaningful relationships with educators, peers, families and the broader community. Strong relationships help children develop a sense of security, confidence, belonging and connection.

Community is an important part of the ABC experience. Whenever possible, we provide opportunities for children to learn about the people, organizations and businesses that make our community special. Community members may be invited to share their knowledge, experiences and roles with the children, helping them develop an understanding of their community and their place within it.

As a not-for-profit, co-operative nursery school, ABC also values its relationships with local families, businesses and community members. The generosity and involvement of our community contribute significantly to the success of our program, and we are proud to support and participate in our local community.

Families as Partners

We recognize that families are children's first and most important teachers and that families have valuable knowledge about their children. Building respectful, reciprocal relationships with families is an important part of our program.

As a co-operative nursery school, ABC provides families with meaningful opportunities to participate in the life of the school. Family members may contribute by helping in the classroom, participating in school events, attending meetings, volunteering and supporting fundraising activities. These opportunities strengthen the connection between home and school and help children see that the important adults in their lives are working together to support them.

We value open communication with families and encourage families to share information about their child's interests, experiences, strengths and needs. We also share resources and information that may support children and families, including community resources, public health information and specialized services when appropriate.

The diversity of our families is reflected throughout our program through books, music, conversations, materials, experiences and activities. We strive to ensure that children see themselves, their families and their communities represented and valued within our learning environment.

Engagement, Play and Inquiry

We believe children learn best when they are actively engaged with their minds, bodies and senses. Children are naturally curious and motivated to explore the world around them. Our educators build on this natural curiosity by providing opportunities for children to investigate, experiment, create, question, problem-solve and make connections.

Play is central to our program. Through play, children develop communication, social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills while exploring their ideas and interests. Open-ended materials and flexible environments encourage children to use their imaginations, make choices, collaborate with others and develop their own ideas.

Educators observe children closely and use their observations to extend learning. Rather than simply providing answers, educators wonder, ask questions, introduce new possibilities and explore alongside children. In this way, educators act as co-learners and help children develop confidence in their ability to think, explore and solve problems.

Children's ideas and interests are valued and incorporated into our programming. Educators remain responsive to emerging interests and use meaningful, intentional experiences to extend children's learning.

Expression and Communication

We recognize that children communicate and express themselves in many different ways. At ABC, we provide opportunities for children to express their thoughts, ideas, feelings and creativity through language, movement, music, art, dramatic play, construction and other forms of communication.

Educators listen carefully to children and create opportunities for meaningful conversations. Children are encouraged to share their ideas, ask questions, tell stories, communicate their needs and listen to the perspectives of others. We support children in developing the confidence and skills to communicate respectfully and effectively.

Emergent, Play-Based Programming

Programming at ABC is play-based, responsive and guided by the interests, ideas and developmental needs of the children. Educators observe, document and reflect on children's learning and use this information to plan meaningful experiences and environments.

Intentional learning opportunities are woven naturally into children's play and everyday experiences. Children may explore early literacy and numeracy concepts, problem-solving, science, creative expression, physical development and social skills through activities that are meaningful and engaging to them.

Our educators provide hands-on experiences that allow children to develop skills through exploration and discovery. Children may investigate letters and sounds through stories and conversations, explore

numbers and mathematical thinking through games and construction, develop fine-motor skills through art and sensory experiences, and build communication and social skills through play with peers.

Educators recognize and respond to “teachable moments” throughout the day, extending children’s thinking through thoughtful questions, conversations and new materials or experiences. This approach allows learning to emerge naturally from children’s curiosity while ensuring that educators are intentional in supporting their development.

At ABC, we believe that early learning is about much more than preparing children for the next stage of school. It is about creating a strong foundation of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression where children feel confident, connected, capable and excited to learn.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELL-BEING

Sleep/Rest

Due to the short program length at ABC, we do not provide a designated nap time. Young students who still require a nap attend our morning program option from 9-11:30 and nap at home afterwards. Children who are tired are encouraged to take a break and have some quiet time in the reading corner.

Physical Activity

The schedule includes many designated times for physical activity throughout the school day. ABC’s spacious classroom allows for an indoor gross motor space where there are bikes, mats, hoops, balls and other toys available. The teachers set up and rotate activities that encourage the development of balance, hand-eye coordination, and other gross motor skills. Whenever the weather allows the students take their learning outdoors to our outdoor play space to enjoy, environmental exploration, and seasonal activities. Movement is incorporated into circle time with actions for songs or poems. In-school experiences which promote engaging gross motor opportunities are arranged throughout the school year.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging Policy

ABC Nursery School recognizes each student’s individuality, uniqueness, strengths, needs and abilities and believes all children and families add value to our school. In keeping with our mission and vision, we respect the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human differences. We encourage and strive for children to explore and learn many different traditions, cultures and languages and welcome families who are willing to share their unique qualities with the class. We are committed to treating all children and families with respect and dignity while helping them grow and learn in a safe and nurturing environment. Our educators strive for both diversity and social inclusion by getting to know each child as a unique individual by observing, listening, documenting, reflecting on practices and communicating with families.

ABC Nursery School strives to create an environment that is welcoming to all families and our program is inclusive and supports an array of developmental and physical abilities.

We are committed to supporting learners of varied abilities and learning styles to reach their full potential and provide accommodations to programming as needed to meet the needs of all children. Our educators pride themselves on maintaining an equitable classroom, where each child is provided with the tools they

need to succeed. If a child has been identified as requiring additional support we will discuss with the family of the student to access support throughout the community. We will work with resource consultants, and other members of a child's support team to develop a plan that will allow the child to be fully supported in the most effective ways. The supervisor and/or board of directors may request a parent meeting to discuss strategies to assist the team in supporting children's behaviour and development. Parents of children with medical or diagnosed developmental needs will have a scheduled meeting with our educators to review the information prior to their child's first day in the program.

We recognize that although all of our students may not require a specific learning tool (for example a visual calendar, first-then board, or a timer) that many students benefit from and enjoy these strategies alongside their peers who need them to succeed. Our teachers encourage communication about uniqueness, and foster an environment of caring, camaraderie, leadership and acceptance.

ABC's EDIB policy will be reviewed by the supervisor at the beginning of each school year with all educators, board members and volunteers. After reviewing the policy, all educators, board members and volunteers will sign off to acknowledge that they have read and understood the policy. The EDIB policy will also be read at our first AGM of the school year to ensure all of our current members are aware of the policy in place. The policy will also be reviewed with any new staff, volunteers or board members throughout the year as needed.

ABC Nursery School will ensure this policy is reviewed and updated annually by the supervisor, making any changes necessary as well as keeping language and legislation up to date. Educators, Board members and volunteers will be made aware of any changes that are made to the policy and will sign off if any changes occur.

Community Partners

At ABC, we appreciate and value the opportunity to build strong relationships with the local community. We enjoy having special guests in our classroom to further support our children's learning and we venture into the community on various curriculum-focused field trips. We welcome students to learn with us and as they complete placements through local highschoools and community colleges. We are grateful to continue to have many wonderful local businesses that support our various fundraising efforts. We believe learning happens best when we collaborate with others.

Professional Development (PD) and Staff Training

Our teachers are skilled and dedicated Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) who are committed to providing high-quality care and early learning experiences for the children at ABC Nursery School. We recognize that ongoing professional learning is an important part of maintaining and strengthening our program.

Professional development opportunities, courses, workshops and training are offered throughout the year to broaden our educators' knowledge, skills and professional growth. Staff are encouraged to participate in relevant learning opportunities whenever possible and to apply new knowledge and practices to enhance the ABC program and support the needs of the children and families we serve.

When a staff member is attending a professional development workshop, course or other approved training activity during program hours, every reasonable effort will be made to arrange for a qualified replacement educator so that the school can remain open and maintain appropriate supervision and staffing.

Professional Development and Program Review

ABC will provide **two scheduled Professional Development (PD) Days** each school year. These days will be reserved for professional learning, program planning and **parent-teacher interviews**. ABC Nursery School will not be open for children to attend on these scheduled PD Days.

ABC is committed to regularly reviewing its policies, procedures and practices to ensure they continue to support the health, safety and well-being of children, families and staff and remain consistent with current legislative and regulatory requirements. **All policies and procedures will be reviewed at least annually**, and updated when necessary to reflect changes in legislation, best practices, program needs or recommendations from relevant authorities. Staff will be informed of any significant changes and provided with training or direction as required.

Health, Safety and Emergency Preparedness

The health and safety of the children and staff at ABC is a priority. All staff are required to maintain current **Standard First Aid and CPR-C certification**, as required by applicable Ontario child-care legislation and regulations. Staff are also responsible for completing and maintaining all required **Systems Priority Training** and other mandatory training on an ongoing basis.

To support emergency preparedness and ensure that staff and children are familiar with emergency procedures, **emergency drills will be conducted monthly** throughout the school year. Drills may include fire drills and other emergency preparedness scenarios, as appropriate to the program and regulatory requirements. Educators will use these opportunities to help children become familiar with emergency procedures in a calm, age-appropriate and reassuring manner.

Drills and emergency procedures will be documented as required, and any concerns identified during a drill will be reviewed and addressed to strengthen ABC's emergency preparedness.

ABC is committed to creating a safe, responsive and professional learning environment through ongoing staff development, regular policy review, emergency preparedness and compliance with applicable Ontario child-care requirements.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Daily Schedule

Our Daily Schedule includes:

- at least 1 hour of uninterrupted free-play time
- at least 30 minutes of outdoor exploration time (weather dependent)
- a scheduled sit down snack time
- large group gathering time to include stories, introduce activities, explore concepts
- small group invitations (facilitated or set-out by teachers)
- music and movement circle time
- washroom routine
- routines such as arrival, tidy up, dressing and dismissal
- scheduled lunch time (for full day children)
- additional outdoor exploration, gathering circles and free-play time (for full day children)

Arrival and Dismissal

Arrival

The doors to the building will open at 8:55 and Educators will welcome your child into the lobby at this time. Class will begin promptly at 9am.

- Please have your child dressed according to weather as we will begin our day with outdoor play
- Please ensure your child arrives with their backpacks and bagged lunches for those children in the full day program

Dismissal

- The teachers will bring the children downstairs to the lobby to dismiss at 11:30 and 2pm. We ask that caregivers wait outside the building at this time.
- The teacher will call students one at a time, their designated caregiver will meet them at the door to collect them and escort their child safely across the parking lot.

Unless otherwise arranged, children will not be released to any person other than those who are specified on the registration form. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, you must inform the educators in advance by email. Ensure the individual picking up is prepared to provide identification.

Late Drop Off & Pickup

If you will be late dropping off your child send an email prior to 9am informing the educators of your expected arrival time.

Please notify the school if you are running late for pickup. A late fee of \$15 will be charged for every additional 10 minutes or portion thereof. This fee can be paid in cash or by e-transfer.

Absence Reporting

If your child will be absent please advise the school prior to 9 am via email, voicemail or the SeeSaw app and provide a reason for the absence.

Preventing Unauthorized Access

To help ensure the safety and security of all children in the Nursery Program, access to the program will be restricted after drop-off time. The doors and elevator access to the cubby/coat area will be locked once drop-off has ended. Staff will unlock the doors five minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.

If your child will be arriving late or you need to pick up your child early, please notify staff in advance by email or through Seesaw. A staff member will meet you at the doors to provide access and assist with your child.

Inclement Weather

If HWDSB makes the decision to close their schools due to inclement weather conditions, ABC Nursery School will also be closed.

HWDSB announces the cancellation of school by 6 a.m. on the HWDSB website and on their Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/hwdsb/>).

Clothing

Children should arrive at school dressed appropriately for the weather, physical activity, and potentially messy activities. When the weather allows, your child will spend time outdoors. Indoor shoes should be rubber soled for safety and outdoor shoes should be weather appropriate. All items should be labeled with your child's name.

The following items should remain at school:

- Extra set of clothing including socks and underwear
- Rubber-soled indoor shoes
- Diapers/wipes (if needed)

The following items should come to school daily:

- Backpack large enough to fit all of the student's items
- Seasonal outdoor clothing (winter wear, raincoat/boots, sun hat)
- Nut-free lunch and a filled water bottle (for students staying until 2pm)

Snack & Lunch

Snack

ABC Nursery provides water and a morning snack for all students.

ABC is a nut-free environment and we adhere to the school anaphylaxis policy. Dietary restrictions and allergies are posted in the kitchen and dining area, clearly visible, for all members to review. We take into consideration allergies and restrictions when planning and serving snacks. The food is prepared carefully in a certified kitchen by a person who has their food-handling certification. Care is taken to ensure that cooking and serving temperatures are achieved and recorded daily.

The snack menu is reviewed and adjusted on a monthly basis and is shared with the families through the SeeSaw app. We take into account the children's likes and dislikes and provide nutritious snacks that include a minimum of 2 food groups.

Teachers discuss healthy eating and food safety with the children during meal times.

Lunch

Students attending the full day program (9-2) should send a lunch that is peanut and treenut free. In accordance with O. Reg. 137/15, ss. 72(1)11, parents of children 44 months and younger who will be sending a lunch will need to provide written permission by completing the Bagged Lunch form. Children 44 months and over can bring a bagged lunch without an additional sign off by the parent.

Lunches should be placed in a labeled lunch bag and be packaged in labeled containers that the child can open mostly independently. ABC will store lunch bags in the refrigerator. If necessary, teachers will warm items in the microwave if packed in a microwave-safe container.

All food, whether provided by ABC or by the parent, will follow the Canada Food Guidelines.

Field Trips & In-School Experiences and Visitors

Waivers will be distributed as required and will be mandatory for participation in off site field trips and special in-school experiences.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, field trips will be planned to enhance the curriculum. Advance notice will be given informing parents of the details, date and times, and any additional fees associated with the trip.

All ABC students will be invited to attend field trips regardless of their enrollment day. A parent or caregiver must attend the field trip and remain with their child at all times. Siblings are welcome to attend some field trips, however extra costs may be associated and are the responsibility of the family. ABC will be closed on the day of an off-site field trip. If you choose for your child to not attend the field trip and it is their scheduled enrollment day, your child will have to remain at home that day. There will not be a refund of fees for any part of the school day that is missed due to an off-site field trip.

In-School Experiences

ABC makes arrangements for in-school experiences such as yoga or music classes, and special visitors such as a firefighter or police officer.

All children enrolled for the day on which the experience is scheduled automatically attend. The teacher's will make every effort to vary the days on which they schedule these special events so that all students have the opportunity to participate in the enriched programming.

There is a Program Enhancement form in the registration package allowing your child to participate in community walks and outdoor exploration under the direct supervision of the Educators.

Communication - The Parent Board

Communication to families from the Board of Directors will be delivered through email.

Communication to families from the teachers will be delivered through email and SeeSaw. The Monthly Calendar, Newsletter, Snack Schedule and Volunteer Schedule will be sent by email. Reminders, updates, pictures, and many resources will be shared through the SeeSaw app.

This Parent Handbook and our website also contain a wealth of information about the ABC program.

OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

Ages & Class Size

ABC Nursery School is licensed by the Ministry of Education, and follows Ministry ratios for preschool designation. At any given time this allows us to accommodate the following:

16 Preschoolers aged 24 months to 5 years
(of which **2 children can be aged 24 to 30 months**)

Days and Hours of Operation

ABC operates from Monday to Friday. Students attend on a M/W/F schedule, a T/Th schedule, or a 5-day schedule. We offer both half-day and full-day enrollment options. Enrollment in the full-day program is based on individual student readiness and is subject to approval by the Educational Lead.

Program times are:

Half Day 9am to 11:30am

Full Day 9am to 2pm

Important Dates, Holidays, and Other Closures

ABC Nursery School is closed on the following holidays:

- Thanksgiving
- Christmas/New Year Break
- Family Day
- March Break
- Easter
- Victoria Day
- Summer Holidays

We follow the HWDSB School Year Calendar for these dates, with the exception of the summer break. The first and last day of summer holidays will be communicated yearly.

Please see the following link for a list of important dates specific to this school year:

<https://abcnurseryschool.ca/events/>

Fees

Registration Fee

The Registration Fee is \$45 and is required upon enrollment to secure your child's spot in the program. This fee is non-refundable and subject to increase in future years.

Snack Fee

Each morning, students are provided with a nutritious snack. The Snack Fee is \$35 and is due on or before your child's first day. **Snack fee is \$35**

Tuition Fees

Fee payments can be made by e-transfer to abctreasurercarlisle@gmail.com. If an alternate payment method is preferred, this should be arranged directly with ABC Treasurer.

Tuition is due on or prior to the first day of each month unless otherwise directed by the Treasurer.

Tuition fees are eligible for tax receipts. Parents will receive digital receipts in February for the respective tax filing year.

ABC Nursery strives to balance affordable fees alongside a high quality program and enriching experience for our students. Any changes in fees will be approved by a majority vote of the Membership.

Any questions regarding fees or deadlines are best directed to the ABC Treasurer. Teachers will direct any account specific queries to the Treasurer.

2 Day Program	3 Day Program	5 Day Program
Volunteer 1x per month or opt out for \$35/ month	Volunteer 1x per month or opt out for \$35/ month	Volunteer 1x per month or opt out for \$35/ month
Attend general meetings 4x per year (\$40 fee if missed)	Attend general meetings 4x per year (\$40 fee if missed)	Attend general meetings 4x per year (\$40 fee if missed)
Fee: \$95.00/month (2.5 hrs) OR \$153.00/month (5 hrs – children will eat their bagged lunch)	Fee: \$135.00/month (2.5 hrs) OR \$222.00/month (5 hrs – children will eat their bagged lunch)	Fee: ----- \$376.00/month (5 hrs - children will eat their bagged lunch)

* Program fees and information can also be found in the ABC Information Package, see appendix A.

Volunteering Opt-Out Fee

As a co-op, ABC relies on family involvement, and encourages a member of each family to volunteer for a minimum of one 2.5 hour period each month. We recognize that some families may not be able to fulfill this requirement in any given month due to a variety of reasons including scheduling conflicts, vacation, illness, or restrictions on in-class visitors. For those who do not complete the required volunteer shift there is a Missed Volunteer Fee of \$35 per month. This fee should be paid alongside the monthly tuition payment.

If you know you will not be able to fulfill the volunteering requirement for the entire year, please speak to the Treasurer about the Volunteer Opt-Out option.

Families are not expected to volunteer or pay the volunteer fee for their child's first month in the program.

General Meeting Fee

The General Meeting fee is \$40. There are three General Meetings throughout the school year. Those who have at least one family member attend the meeting will have this fee waived. If a family misses a general meeting for any reason (opting out, scheduling conflicts, vacation, illness) then this \$40 fee should be paid alongside the monthly tuition payment.

Withdrawal Deposit

A deposit equal to the value of one month's tuition will be due prior to your child's first day in the program. The Board reserves the right to use this deposit towards any unpaid fees upon withdrawal. If there are no fees outstanding, and intent to withdraw is communicated with sufficient notice (<30 days), the deposit will be applied against your child's final month.

Refund Policy

With 30 days written notice of withdrawal the withdrawal fee will be applied against your child's final month as stated in our withdrawal deposit. No other fees, including registration fee, absences and snack fee, will be refunded by ABC Nursery School.

Summary of Fees

- Registration Fee = \$45
- Snack Fee = Determined by enrollment schedule
- Tuition Fee = Refer to our website for up-to-date monthly tuition fees based on your child's enrollment schedule
- Withdrawal Deposit: Equivalent to one month tuition
- Volunteer Fee = \$35/month (waived if volunteering requirement met)
- General Meeting Fee = \$40/meeting (waived if present at meeting)

Multiple Child Discount

For families with more than one child enrolled in any given month, a multi-child discount of 20% for the second and subsequent child within the same family will be applied to the Tuition Fee only.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)

In October 2022, ABC Nursery School Inc. opted into and was approved for the **Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System**. CWELCC is a federal-provincial initiative designed to make licensed child care more affordable for families while supporting access to high-quality, inclusive child care and strengthening the early childhood education workforce.

ABC Nursery School is committed to participating in the CWELCC System and complying with the applicable requirements established by the Government of Ontario and the City of Hamilton, our local Service System Manager.

What Does This Mean for Families?

CWELCC provides reduced child care fees for eligible children enrolled in participating licensed child care programs. Fee reductions were introduced in stages beginning April 1, 2022. By December 31, 2022, fees for eligible children had been reduced by up to 52.75% compared with March 2022 fees. Effective January 1, 2025, Ontario introduced a maximum base fee of **\$22 per day** for eligible children in CWELCC-enrolled programs. For 2026, the \$22 per day maximum remains in place, although programs charging less than \$22 per day continue to charge their lower approved rate.

Families do not need to apply separately for the CWELCC fee reduction. ABC applies the applicable fee reductions directly to eligible child care fees in accordance with the requirements of the CWELCC System.

The CWELCC System is intended not only to make child care more affordable, but also to increase access to licensed child care spaces, support inclusive and high-quality programs, and strengthen Ontario's early years workforce through improved compensation and professional development opportunities.

As CWELCC requirements and funding arrangements may change, ABC Nursery School will continue to follow current provincial and municipal requirements and will communicate significant changes affecting families whenever applicable.

Base Fees and Non-Base Fees

CWELCC fee reductions apply to **eligible base fees**. Base fees are fees that are mandatory for a family to pay in order to receive child care. Examples may include tuition and mandatory registration or administrative fees, as well as items and services that are considered part of the regular child care program, such as play materials, equipment and furnishings, supervision during operational hours, and the development and implementation of individualized plans.

CWELCC fee reductions do **not** apply to permitted **non-base fees**. These may include:

Late pick-up fees; Non-sufficient funds (NSF) or bank processing fees; Optional field trips; Optional transportation; Fundraising fees or other optional fundraising activities; Volunteer opt-out fees, where applicable; Fees associated with missed meetings or other optional parent participation requirements, where permitted; and Other fees that are specifically identified as non-base fees under current CWELCC requirements.

ABC will ensure that fees charged to families are consistent with current CWELCC requirements and applicable provincial and municipal guidelines. Families will be provided with information regarding any applicable fees as part of the registration and enrolment process.

For the most current information regarding CWELCC, including current fee requirements and eligibility, families can visit the **Government of Ontario** and **City of Hamilton** websites.

[Government of Ontario – CWELCC Information](#)

[City of Hamilton – Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care](#)

Waitlist Policy

The program at ABC is highly sought after, and therefore, we often have a waitlist for enrollment. We add children to the waitlist on a first-come, first-serve basis determined by the date the waitlist request was made to our Educational Lead. ABC has 3 waitlists based on the child's age at the time of requested start date:

1. Age 2-2.5
2. Junior Preschool
3. Senior Preschool (pre-kindergarten)
- 4.

In order to ensure the success and continuation of our program, we must ensure that we maintain a balance in regards to the ages of students enrolled in our program. Our license allows us to have 3 spots available for children aged 2-2.5 and of the remaining spaces we reserve approximately 40% for students of junior preschool age and 60% for students of senior preschool/pre-kindergarten age.

When a space becomes available, the child who is next in line on the waitlist of the appropriate age group would be offered admission via email and phone. The family has 48 hours to respond, otherwise, the next child on the waitlist will be contacted and offered admission.

Should a child age-out of their current waitlist before being offered a space, the educational lead will add them to the subsequent list based on the date the original waitlist request was made.

No fees are required to join the waitlist and the completion of the ABC application form is only needed when a space becomes available and the family accepts the admission.

Families can contact ABC about their child's position on the waiting list.

In the event that a family currently enrolled in the school would like to switch programs, or enroll a subsequent eligible child, they will take priority over the waitlist.

Late Enrollment Policy

It is not uncommon for new students to join our classes at ABC as the school year progresses. Children who are enrolled later can start prior to March 31st. Families requesting a start date in April, May, or June will be refused, but may join the following September. Any exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the teachers, and will be considered only in rare circumstances.

CO-OP Membership

Volunteer Roles

Co-operative programs rely on the active participation of caregivers. Volunteering not only assists with the daily and overall operation of the nursery school, but also gives parents an opportunity to be an active member of their child's education. One member of each family must fulfill a volunteer role and there are three options to fulfill this requirement. You will be invited to sign up for your chosen option at your child's orientation.

Option 1: In-Class Volunteering

In-class volunteering involves a family member spending one 2.5 hour block per month assisting in the classroom. Caregivers are welcome to volunteer at a time when their child is attending the program. Each in-class volunteer must have a current Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) and a Negative TB test result on file prior to volunteering.

Prior to the start of each month, an editable Google Sheet listing the available volunteer time slots will be emailed to all families. Time slots are on a first-come first-serve basis.

It is each family's responsibility to fulfill their volunteer shift. If you are unable to fulfill your volunteer shift please let the teachers know in advance. If a monthly volunteer shift is missed, a missed volunteering fee of \$35 will be required alongside your child's monthly tuition.

Families are not expected to volunteer during their child's first month of enrollment to allow their child a sufficient amount of time to adjust to the program

Option 2: Out-of-Class Volunteering

Out-of-class volunteering involves assisting with tasks that contribute to the overall operations of the nursery school but that can be completed outside of school hours. This includes tasks such as playspace maintenance, cleaning, and making playdough. Families selecting this option should expect to spend a similar amount of time to those volunteering in class (2.5 hours per month). If selecting an out-of-class volunteering position, please make sure that you will be able to commit to your chosen role as failure to complete your tasks will result in payment of the opt-out fee.

Executive Board Member

The Nursery School is kept in operation by a parent volunteer Board of Directors. As families come and go, there are shifting positions within the Board. Where there is a void in a board position, you may opt to fill that position as your volunteer role.

Volunteer Opt-Out

If a member of your family will not be able to fulfill a volunteer role for the duration of your child's enrollment, please speak with the Treasurer. We do have a limited number of permanent opt-out spaces available. Those who opt-out will be required to pay the volunteer opt-out fee of \$35 each month.

Fundraising

ABC Nursery School relies on fundraising efforts to enhance the program. Participation in fundraising events is mandatory for all enrolled families. Funds raised through these efforts are put towards:

- Field trips
- In-class visitors and experiences
- Holiday and End-of-Year party
- Art materials, books, and toys

The more we raise, the more funds we have to put towards enriching the program for our students.

Each March, we host ABC Come Skate with Me; a community event that takes place at the Carlisle Arena. This event marks the launch of our online Silent Auction. All ABC families must participate in the planning and execution of these events. There is no opt-out option and all families must be available to help on the day of the community event.

The details regarding these planned fundraising efforts will be shared at the first General Meeting of the year.

General Meetings

There are three General Meetings per year. At these meetings, important issues are discussed and decisions and plans are made, therefore at least one caregiver from each enrolled family **must** attend. The dates for these meetings will be provided to families at the ABC Orientation.

General Meetings take place virtually over Zoom and are approximately 1.5 hours in duration. Prior to each meeting, the Secretary will send a Zoom link and an agenda outlining items to be discussed.

If a caregiver from your family fails to attend a General Meeting for any reason, the missed General Meeting fee of \$40 should be paid alongside the monthly tuition fee.

The Co-op Executive Responsibilities

Position Title	Responsibilities
President	- Oversees all the functions/administration of the school - Plans and prepares Executive and General Meetings - Responsible for completing all licensing and Government forms/documents - Deals with issues/concerns which otherwise cannot be dealt with effectively
Vice President	- Works closely with the President

	- Performs duties and tasks delegated by the President - Oversees fundraising events throughout the year - Create/maintain database of past/present sponsors - Secure advertising for events with local newspapers, publications, etc. - Delegate roles/expectations to fundraising committee members for each event - Maintain schedules, timelines & deadlines for events - After completion of events, provide the board with a summary of the event
Treasurer	- Is responsible for the financial aspects of the school - Maintains a master list of membership fees received for each month - Reconciles bank statements and maintains the general ledger - Completes grant forms, income tax forms, audit exemption forms, tuition receipts, etc. - Prepares budgets - Retains financial records/receipts and work alongside bookkeeper in event of audit - Reviews financial statements prepared by bookkeeper - Manages incoming/outgoing cash disbursements
Secretary	- Takes the minutes of the Executive and General meetings and distributes these minutes to members - Tends to other letters and outgoing mail - Seeks information regarding advertising, flyers, etc. - Has contact information for members - Maintains and updates various forms - Is Co-Admin on social media accounts
Executive Officer	- Answers questions brought forth by other Board Members regarding their roles and responsibilities - Uses their previous experience on the Board to provide guidance and training to new members

For a more detailed description of the roles and responsibilities of Board Members please refer to the Board of Directors Handbook.

Board Member (Parent/Caregiver) Responsibilities

- to be a member in good standing (fees paid on due date, forms completed, commitment to a committee etc.)
- to act in the school's best interest by adhering to the policies and procedures, rules and regulations
- to attend all General Meetings
- to read all newsletters and school communications
- to inform the Educators of any changes to personal information (phone number, address, allergies, medication etc.) or other pertinent information
- to bring children to school on time and dressed in clothing appropriate for the weather and messy play

- to inform the Educators by phone or email if their child will not attend or will be late
- to pick up their child on time and to inform the Educators, in writing, if someone other than the usual Caregiver is picking up the child
- to be an active member of the ABC team by performing all duties of their volunteer/committee/fundraising positions

Have a Question or Suggestion?

If it pertains to:	Contact:
Enrollment, your specific child, programming, snack/lunch, an absence or early pickup, materials for the classroom, illness or injury, volunteering, child development	Teachers
Policies and procedures	President
Fundraising initiatives If you cannot get a hold of the President	Vice-President
Fee payments, budget	Treasurer
Changes to emergency or contact information	Secretary & Teachers
Withdraw your child	Teachers & Treasurer

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) Policy

As per Ministry regulations, the intent of requiring a VSS is as follows:

Obtaining a vulnerable sector check is a precautionary measure that is used to help determine whether individuals who are involved in the provision of childcare are fit and suitable to hold these positions of trust. Considering a person's relevant criminal history helps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children in care.

A Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) must be completed by all staff prior to the commencement of their employment duties.

A Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) must be completed by all in-class volunteers and placement students prior to the commencement of their volunteer duties. The cost of the VSS is the responsibility of the person obtaining it and will not be reimbursed by ABC.

Caregivers without a VSS on file can attend special events and field trips, however they cannot volunteer in the classroom or be alone with any student at any time.

A VSS is considered valid if it is less than 6 months old from the date it is presented to ABC Nursery School. A copy of the VSS will be kept on file at ABC.

There are a variety of Police Security Clearances available. Please ensure you apply for the Vulnerable Sector Screening which is specific for working with vulnerable populations including children. The Vulnerable Sector Screening is the only police clearance that can be accepted at ABC Nursery School as per Ministry regulations.

Municipality	Cost	Time to Process	Link to Application
Hamilton Residents	\$25.00	Approx. 30 days	https://hamiltonpolice.on.ca/how-to/get-background-check
Halton Residents	\$30.00	2-4 weeks	https://www.haltonpolice.ca/en/services-and-reporting/record-checks.aspx#Vulnerable-Sector-Check-

Transition Period

A transitional period has been put in place by the Ministry due to possible wait times for VSS applications to be processed. This policy is as follows:

ABC Nursery School does not necessarily need to obtain the Vulnerable Sector Screening from a staff or volunteer person before the commencement of his/her duties, but they must have proof (i.e. a receipt) that the individual has applied for a Vulnerable Sector Screening.

ABC Nursery School has the following provisions in place to support the safety and wellbeing of children in the program until the Vulnerable Sector Screening is obtained:

- ABC Nursery School will not permit a person awaiting a Vulnerable Sector Screening to be unsupervised with any registered child
- The staff/student/volunteer who are waiting for their VSS must complete a declaration form, indicating any previous offenses that may contravene their ability to work with children

Annual Offense Declarations

After a there is a copy of a valid VSS on file, an Offense Declaration, indicating any changes must be signed annually within 15 days of the anniversary of the VSS or the most recent annual Offense Declaration.

An Offense Declaration is a written declaration signed by an individual that lists all of the individual's convictions for offenses under the Canadian Criminal Code, if any, up to the date of the declaration, that are not included in the most recent Vulnerable Sector Screening obtained by the licensee.

Licensees must ensure that all staff, volunteers, and students obtain a new Vulnerable Sector Screening every five (5) years and provide Offense Declarations for every year that Vulnerable Sector Screenings are not required.

If ABC Nursery School's relationship with an individual who has previously provided a VSS terminates and then subsequently resumes after six or more months, the individual must provide a new VSS to ABC.

Tuberculosis (TB) Test

It is a Ministry requirement that all adults volunteering in the classroom provide a negative one step TB Test result prior to starting, dated no more than 30 days before volunteering commences. This is not covered by OHIP, and the fee is the responsibility of the family. We recommend you inquire with your family doctor about where you can obtain a TB test as this varies by region.

Supervision of Volunteers and Students

Only RECE staff and assistant staff will be counted in our staffing ratios. Other volunteers (parents, placement students, volunteers, resource teachers, etc.) will not be left alone with a child, nor included in meeting staff ratios.

RECE staff and assistant staff members, with completed criminal reference checks including Vulnerable Sector Screening, will be the only people allowed to be in direct/unsupervised company of the children.

All volunteers and placement students must have a valid Vulnerable Sector Screening and Negative TB Test on file, and will not be left unsupervised with any child or group of children. All other visitors will be supervised at all times.

All volunteers must be familiar with and follow the Supervision of Volunteers Policy when in the classroom. ABC Nursery School staff will be responsible on a daily basis for making sure the policy is being followed.

In the event that the school is short a staff member on a given day, and a supply teacher is not available, two volunteers with CPR-C, can replace one staff member to maintain ratio.

Bagged Lunch

Caregivers with children enrolled in the 5-hour program will give written consent stating that they will provide their child with a bagged lunch. The lunch will meet the following guidelines:

- The lunch must adhere to the Canada Food Guide (<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>)
- **NO peanut or tree nut products are to be included**
- Food items cannot be shared amongst students
- Lunch bags and containers must be labeled with the child's first and last name
- Lunches should be packed in containers and lunch bags that the child can operate with minimal assistance
- An ice pack must included in a lunch bag that contains perishable items
- Staff will check the contents of the lunches to ensure they meet the above criteria.

Procedure for Forgotten Lunch

If a child arrives at school without a bagged lunch the parent/guardian will be notified as soon as possible and asked to drop off a bagged lunch.

If a parent/guardian cannot be reached or cannot drop off a bagged lunch prior to lunch time, ABC school will provide lunch for that child. Items such as bread, cereal, fruit, fresh vegetables, crackers, milk and cheese will be available.

Health Records

The Child Care and Early Years Act stipulates that prior to admission each child must be immunized according to the appropriate immunization schedule or provide the appropriate documentation stating the choice to abstain from immunizations. Immunization records must be kept up to date in your child's file at all times. According to Ministry regulations, ABC Nursery School reserves the right to refuse attendance to a child in the program if the above information has not been submitted by the parent. Immunization records will be sent to public health as per ministry requirements.

Severe Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy

"Anaphylaxis" means a serious systemic allergic reaction and can be life threatening; resulting in circulatory collapse or shock, and "anaphylactic" has a corresponding meaning. The allergy may be to food, insect stings, or other substances. Signs and symptoms may include ANY of the following hives, swelling (face, lips, tongue), itching, warmth, redness, coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain or tightness, throat tightness, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny, itchy nose and watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing, nausea, pain or cramps, vomiting, diarrhea, paler than normal skin colour / blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizziness or lightheadedness, shock, anxiety, sense of doom (the feeling that something bad is about to happen), headache, uterine cramps, metallic taste. Early recognition of symptoms and immediate treatment can save a life.

ABC Nursery School strives to reduce the risk to severely allergic or anaphylactic children and has implemented a comprehensive policy regarding children with severe allergies and anaphylaxis, to make parents and staff aware of their seriousness, and to ensure the well-being of all children. ABC will make every reasonable effort to reduce the risk to children with severe allergies or anaphylaxis in accordance with this policy. Consideration is also given to children who have special dietary requirements.

ABC nursery school will not use foods or materials containing significant allergens such as nuts or nut products. As part of this policy we ask your co-operation in ensuring that:

- 1) your child is cleaned of any consumed allergens such as peanut butter which could be spilled on their clothing when eating at home and,
- 2) that your child does not bring any food into the preschool classroom or preschool area, including hallway and coat hook area.

The policy is in place to help support the needs of a child with a severe allergy or anaphylaxis and to provide information on anaphylaxis and awareness to parents, staff, students and visitors at the school. This provision aligns with Sabrina's Law, 2005 legislation which came into effect on January 1, 2006, requiring all district school boards and school authorities in Ontario to develop an anaphylactic policy.

Risk Reduction Strategies

The school will make all reasonable efforts to ensure that the risk of exposure to the allergy is reduced.

These strategies will include:

- Eating surfaces will be cleaned with soap and water then bleach and water, before and after eating, as per Ministry of Health regulations
- Staff and children will wash hands thoroughly before and after eating
- Children will eat only food that they have been provided by the teacher or their caregiver
- Children will not share food, utensils or containers

- Food will be placed on a napkin rather than in direct contact with a table
- The snack menu will be reviewed with the caregiver of the child with anaphylaxis; if possible, the allergen will be removed from the menu on days the child is attending
- Staff will monitor lunches to ensure food does not enter the classroom if it contains nuts or has the warning sign “may contain with nuts”
- Staff will supervise the child that has a life threatening allergy closely by sitting next to or across from them during the lunch time
- A policy regarding outside food will be implemented and enforced
- This list will be revised as necessary based on the allergies of enrolled children

Communication Plan

It is the responsibility of the parent to:

- Inform the school if their child has allergies or is anaphylactic or potentially anaphylactic, upon registration or at any time an allergy develops
- In a timely manner, complete medical forms and the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan and have it signed by a physician (Appendix A) which includes a photograph, description of the child’s allergy, emergency procedure, contact information, and consent to administer medication. This will be posted in the child’s classroom in a key area with parents’ permission. This form must be updated annually
- It is recommended that the child wear medical identification (e.g. MedicAlert® bracelet).
- Provide the school with a letter from their child’s physician if their child has outgrown an allergy or no longer requires an epinephrine auto-injector
- Provide the child care facility with two unexpired adrenaline auto-injectors
- Ensure that auto-injectors are taken on field trips
- Be willing to provide safe foods for their child as necessary or for special occasions
- Provide support to the facility and staff as required

It is the responsibility of the staff and volunteers to:

- Be aware of children with anaphylactic or potentially anaphylactic allergies
 - A list of all children with allergies and their individual action plan will be displayed inside the classroom near the attendance binder and on the kitchen counter (Parental permission is required to post the child’s plan)
- Upon the child’s admission to the school, the supervisor and the relevant teaching staff will discuss the child’s allergies with the parent
- Ensure annual training in caring for a child with anaphylaxis is provided and received
- Discuss anaphylaxis with the other children, in age-appropriate terms as needed
- Encourage children not to share lunches or trade snacks
- Work with the parents to choose foods for the menu that are safe for all children in the school if possible
- Reinforce hand washing for all children and staff/volunteers before and after eating
- Follow policies for reducing risk in eating and common areas
- Ensure that the auto-injector is in a safe, UNLOCKED location and accessible in an emergency but out of the reach of young children. This area will be labeled and identified in the individual plan. Our school’s location is on top of the white refrigerator in the kitchen. Epi-pens will be LOCKED when the child with the prescribed epi-pem is **NOT** in program.
- Place posters describing signs and symptoms and emergency procedures in relevant school areas
- Supervise children while eating to the best of their ability to ensure there is no sharing of food

- Share information about anaphylaxis and strategies put in place to reduce the risk of reaction with the entire school community (e.g. students, parents)
- Provide on-going reminders in newsletters, bulletins, and during information events as needed

Individual Plan

The parent or caregiver of an enrolled child with an anaphylactic allergy are required to provide input on the child's individual Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan. This will include the following:

- A description of the child's allergy
- Monitoring and avoidance strategies
- Signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic allergy
- Action to be taken by nursery school staff in the event the child has an anaphylactic reaction
- Parent/guardian consent that allows the nursery school staff to administer the allergy medication in the event their child has an anaphylactic reaction
- Emergency contact information

A sample of an Individual Plan will be provided if requested. The Individual Plan must be signed by the parent/guardian and the child's physician.

The individual plan for a child with anaphylaxis and the emergency procedures for each child shall be reviewed as follows:

- By the supervisor before the child is placed in the school and at least annually afterwards
- By all employees before they begin their employment and at least annually afterwards
- By volunteers and students who will be providing care or guidance at the nursery school before they begin providing that care or guidance and at least annually afterwards

School Emergency Plan

Staff should be able to recognize an allergic reaction. A person having an anaphylactic reaction might have ANY of these signs and symptoms:

- Skin system: Hives, swelling (face, lips, tongue), itching, warmth, redness
- Respiratory system: Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain or tightness, throat tightness, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny, itchy nose and watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing
- Gastrointestinal system: Nausea, pain or cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- Cardiovascular system: Paler than normal skin colour/blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizziness or light-headedness, shock
- Other: anxiety, sense of doom (the feeling that something bad is about to happen), headache, uterine cramps, metallic taste

Early recognition of symptoms and immediate treatment could save a person's life.

To respond effectively during an emergency, a routine has been established and practiced, similar to a fire drill. During an emergency:

- Give epinephrine auto-injector at the first sign of a known or suspected anaphylactic reaction
- Call 9-1-1 or local emergency medical services and tell them someone is having a life-threatening allergic reaction
- Give a second dose of epinephrine in 5 to 15 minutes IF the reaction continues or worsens

- Go to the nearest hospital immediately (ideally by ambulance), even if symptoms are mild or have stopped as the reaction could worsen or come back
- Call emergency contact person (e.g. parent, guardian) as soon as possible

Location of Auto-Injectors

All auto-injectors are to be kept in a labeled box, out of reach of children. This location will be outlined in the Individual Anaphylactic Emergency Plan. The location for our school is on top of the white refrigerator in the kitchen or in the teacher backpack when outside or on a field trip. Epi-pens will be locked when the epi pen prescribed child is **NOT** in program.

Staff and Volunteer Training

All staff and volunteers will receive training from a physician or a parent on procedures to be followed in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction. Training will be provided at the beginning of the school year and as needed for new staff and volunteers and as new children attend preschool.

The policy and procedures will be reviewed, annually, by staff and volunteers. This will be documented and records will be kept indicating that staff and volunteers have reviewed the policy. Staff and volunteers will also be encouraged to review anaphylaxis training online. Families will also see a demonstration of how to use an Epi-pen at the first General Meeting of the school year.

<http://www.eworkshop.on.ca/edu/anaphylaxis/sc00.cfm?L=1>

Outside Food Policy

At this time, no outside food will be permitted for special occasions/events/birthdays, as the school will provide a special snack for these celebrations. The educators will communicate with families about holidays such as Halloween and Valentine's Day. We do ask that any items sent in for special days such as these are non-edible (i.e. pencils, stickers, etc.).

Administration of Medication

ABC Nursery School will administer provided medications that are required as immediate emergency treatment such as emergency puffers, auto-injectors or medications required for epilepsy and diabetes as well as any other medication that a prescribing medical professional determines to prevent a significant risk to the child's health. Written authorization by the parent is required and must be given by completing the top portion of the Drug Administration Form. Each time a drug is administered it will be immediately documented on the same form and kept in the child's file.

Educators cannot administer prescribed daily medication, antibiotics, etc. If your child requires such medication while at school, a caregiver must come to the school to administer the medication.

Teachers cannot apply sunscreen. Please apply sunscreen in the morning before school on days your child will require it.

IMPORTANT – Any kind of medication should not be kept in the child's school bag. It is the caregiver's responsibility to hand the medication to a Teacher to be properly stored out of the reach of children. Please keep all other medications, including over the counter medications, at home.

Infection and Illness Prevention and Control

ABC Nursery School is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe environment for children, families, volunteers and staff. These policies may be updated as guidance changes from **Public Health, the Ontario Ministry of Education, or other applicable authorities**.

Everyone connected with ABC has a role in helping prevent the spread of illness. Infection prevention measures include regular hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and equipment, appropriate food-handling practices, and keeping individuals who are unwell away from the group when required.

Staying Home When Sick

Children and staff should remain at home when they are experiencing symptoms of illness that prevent them from comfortably participating in the program or that require exclusion under current Public Health guidance. Families should use current Public Health recommendations when determining whether a child is well enough to attend.

Parents/guardians must inform ABC as soon as possible if their child has a **communicable disease or significant illness**, particularly when it may affect other children or staff.

If a child becomes ill while at ABC, they will be comforted and cared for by a staff member in a designated area away from the group, as reasonably possible. Parents/guardians will be contacted and are expected to arrange prompt pick-up when required. An illness record will be completed and maintained in accordance with ABC's policies and applicable requirements.

ABC will follow current Public Health guidance regarding exclusion periods and return to care. This may include requirements related to fever, vomiting, diarrhea, respiratory illness, communicable diseases, or other symptoms.

Emergency Information

Current emergency contact information and required parental consents must be kept on file for every child. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying ABC immediately of any changes to addresses, telephone numbers, emergency contacts, medical information or other information needed to respond to an emergency.

Communicable Disease and Outbreak Management

ABC will follow the direction and recommendations of the local **Medical Officer of Health/Public Health** in the event of a communicable disease concern or outbreak. Where required, ABC will report designated diseases or outbreaks to Public Health and will implement any measures directed by Public Health.

Families will be notified of an outbreak or significant communicable disease concern when required, while maintaining appropriate confidentiality and privacy. Communication may include email, notices or other methods used by ABC to communicate with families.

Our goal is to balance infection prevention with children's need for consistent, inclusive participation in the program while following current health and safety requirements.

When to Keep Your Child Home

- **Fever within the last 24 hours.**
- **Began taking a prescribed antibiotic within the last 24 hours (includes for pink eye, chest infection, strep throat).**
- **Continuous dry hacking cough.**
- **Diarrhea and/or vomiting (within the last 48 hours).**
- **He/she or their immediate family has come in contact with, or is under quarantine for, a serious respiratory illness. This includes the child, volunteer parent and/or direct family members (i.e. Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome [SARS]).**
- **Constant running nose that is NOT clear in colour.**
- **Communicable diseases or prolonged illness should be reported to the teacher as soon as possible.**
- **Any child who has contracted head lice shall not attend the preschool until such time as they have been checked by a health professional and been deemed to be clear of all live lice and eggs. A note from a health professional (Family Physician, RN, or RPN) shall be submitted to the Supervisor at the time the child re-enters the school. It is the parent's responsibility to obtain this documentation. Any parent of a child deemed to have head lice is asked to inform the preschool supervisor so that parents of other children in the class may check their child for head lice.**

If the question still remains, please consult the educators who can give you information about specific conditions and how long your child will need to remain at home.

Absence Due to Illness

In the event that your child is ill and cannot attend ABC, please call, email, or send a message on the SeeSaw app to inform the educators of their absence and any related symptoms.

Cleaning and Hygiene Practices

ABC Nursery School follows current **Public Health and Ministry of Education** guidance for cleaning, disinfecting and infection prevention. Educators maintain a clean and sanitary environment through regular hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces, toys, equipment, washrooms and high-touch areas.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

- Tables and food preparation/eating surfaces are **cleaned and disinfected before and after use** using appropriate products and procedures.

- Toys, equipment and frequently touched surfaces are cleaned and disinfected regularly and more frequently when required, including during a communicable disease outbreak.
- Washrooms, sinks and diapering areas are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected as required throughout the day and at the end of each session.
- Floors and carpets are maintained and cleaned regularly according to their use and condition.
- Diapering and toileting procedures are followed according to current health and safety requirements.
- During an outbreak, ABC will increase cleaning and disinfecting as directed by Public Health.

All cleaning products, disinfectants and chemicals are **clearly labelled and securely stored out of children's reach**.

Hand Hygiene

Children and staff are encouraged and supported to wash their hands frequently, including:

- Before eating or handling food;
- After using the toilet or completing a diaper change;
- After wiping or blowing a nose;
- After outdoor play or activities that may result in dirty hands; and
- Whenever hands are visibly soiled.

Liquid hand soap and disposable paper towels are provided in the school washrooms and hand-washing areas. Educators model and support proper hand-washing practices throughout the day.

Snack and Food Surfaces

Snack and food preparation surfaces are cleaned and disinfected before and after use using the appropriate **cleaning and disinfecting products and procedures**. Surfaces are allowed to air dry as required by the product instructions and current Public Health guidance.

Diapering

Diapering procedures are posted at the change table and are followed for every diaper change. The change table is cleaned and disinfected after each use. The child and the person completing the diaper change wash their hands after each diaper change.

Soiled diapers are placed in a plastic bag, securely tied and disposed of in the designated garbage container.

ABC regularly reviews its cleaning and hygiene practices and will update procedures as necessary to reflect current Public Health guidance, Ministry requirements and best practices.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

These are minimum recommendations and apply to normal operating conditions. During an outbreak of a communicable disease, extra cleaning and disinfecting is necessary.

Toys		
Toy	When	How
Small toys that go into mouth	Daily or more often as observed by staff	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > air dry Hard plastic toys can go into the sanitizer and cloth toys into the washing machine
Large toys	Weekly	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > air dry
Dress up clothes	Weekly	clean (launder) > dry on hottest setting
Hats/Headwear	After each play session	clean (wipe or launder)
Play Areas/Surfaces		
Dining table tops	Before & after meals	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > air dry
Floors – tiles, vinyl	Daily in infant & toddler areas and eating areas. Weekly in other areas.	clean with soap and water
Floors – carpet	Twice weekly Twice per year	vacuum steam clean
Small rugs	Twice weekly	vacuum or launder
Toilet and Potty Chairs		
Toilet bowls	Weekly	clean > toilet bowl cleaner
Toilet seats and rims	Daily	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > air dry
Flushing handle, door knobs, counters, faucets	Daily	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > air dry
Counters, faucets	After each use	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > air dry
Diaper change surface	After each use	clean (soap/water) > disinfect (bleach/water) > wipe dry before next child is placed on table

Dish Washing

Reusable eating utensils and dishes must be washed, disinfected, rinsed, and air-dried. According to Ministry regulations the 3 sink method or an industrial sanitizing machine must be used in washing dishes.

The 3 Sink Method

Sink 1	Sink 2	Sink 3
Hot water and dish soap	Hot rinse	Warm rinse and 10% bleach

Alternatively, the following method can be used if an approved industrial sanitizing machine is on site:

Sink 1: Scrape and rinse dishes

Sink 2: Water in hot soapy water

Sink 3: Rinse and then place dishes on trays and insert into industrial sanitizing machine; when done air dry

Hazard Mitigation - Identifying and Addressing Hazards

The safety and well-being of children in our care is our highest priority. In accordance with licensing requirements, we regularly identify and address or eliminate hazards that could cause imminent harm to a child. This includes ensuring that poisonous or hazardous substances are securely stored in locked areas, such as the kitchen, and kept out of children's reach; positioning furniture, to the best of our ability, to minimize the risk of tipping or falling; and identifying and addressing trip hazards or conditions that could result in a fall. Staff continuously monitor the environment and take appropriate action when a potential hazard is identified.

Fire Safety

Fire drills will be conducted once per month and records shall be maintained for a minimum of 24 months.

Fire Drill Procedures

- Lead Educator & Assistant- leads the group of children to the nearest fire exit
- there are two exits – main doors at the front of the class and rear door through the kitchen
- Supervisor ensures all kitchen appliances are off, checks all the rooms and closes all doors and evacuates with the backpack containing attendance binder, emergency records, first aid kit and emergency medications (epi-pens, puffers)
- Staff, children, and volunteers assemble at the grass opposite the building on the south side
- Lead Educator takes attendance of the group
- Supervisor ensures that 911 has been called
- Lead Educator and/or Assistant meets the fire department and immediately notifies responding Fire Emergency Personnel if any occupants are missing
- Staff, children, and volunteers remain at the emergency assembly point waiting for direction from the fire emergency personnel
- If unable to re-enter the building, staff, children, and volunteers proceed to the designated Emergency Evacuation location: **Carlisle Pet Foods, 1462 Centre Road, Carlisle 289-895-7490**

- Parents or emergency contacts will be notified immediately by telephone and will be required to pick up their child

Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedures

The intent of this Serious Occurrence Policy is to ensure that there is a plan to deal with any serious incidents that may affect the health, safety and wellbeing of children and staff and to ensure that any serious incidents are reported, tracked and followed up on.

Serious Occurrences are defined as follows:

- Death of a child
- Allegation of abuse and/or neglect
- Life-threatening injury or illness
- Missing or unsupervised child(ren)
 - Child was found
 - Child is still missing
- Unplanned disruption of normal operations
 - Fire
 - Flood
 - Gas leak
 - Detection of carbon monoxide
 - Outbreak
 - Lockdown
 - Other emergency relocation or temporary closure

Responding to a Serious Occurrence

Immediate Action	- Health and safety of students/staff/volunteers is addressed - Appropriate emergency personnel (fire, police, ambulance, Children's Aid Society, etc.) are contacted - Notify parent/guardian as necessary - Notify the President or Vice-President - Complete an Accident Report to be provided to the parent as necessary
Within 24 Hours	- Report the Serious Occurrence, using the Serious Occurrence Notification Form, found within the online Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) - Post a summary of the report on the parent information board
Annually	- Teacher completes an Annual Summary and Analysis Report to summarize the serious occurrences throughout the year and identify issues, trends and actions taken - This report must be kept on file and reviewed during licensing inspections
Ongoing	- Conduct follow up actions to serious occurrences in a timely manner to prevent future events - Accident Reports are to be kept on file for 2 years - Serious Occurrence Reports and Summary Reports are to be kept on file for 3 years

Missing Child Procedure

Purpose

The safety and well-being of every child in our care is our highest priority. In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) and Ontario Regulation 137/15, the centre maintains procedures to prevent, identify, respond to, and report situations in which a child receiving care is missing. All children must be supervised by an adult at all times, whether on or off the child care premises.

Prevention and Active Supervision

Staff will take reasonable steps to prevent a child from going missing, including:

- Maintaining active supervision of children at all times.
- Conducting regular attendance checks and head counts, particularly during transitions between rooms, outdoor play, field trips, and other activities.
- Ensuring attendance records are kept current and children are accounted for throughout the day.
- Securing doors, gates, and other access points where appropriate.
- Following the centre's safe arrival and dismissal procedures.
- Confirming that children are released only to authorized individuals in accordance with the centre's safe arrival and dismissal policy.

Accurate attendance records are particularly important in an emergency or missing-child situation because they allow staff to quickly determine which children are present and require supervision.

When a Child Is Considered Missing

A child will be considered missing when staff cannot account for the child's whereabouts or cannot locate the child within the expected area of supervision.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- A child cannot be located during a transition or attendance check.
- A child is not present in the expected classroom, playground, or other supervised area.
- A child has left the child care premises without authorization.
- A child is discovered to have been temporarily left without adult supervision.

Any concern that a child may be missing must be treated seriously and reported to the Supervisor/Designate immediately.

Immediate Response

When a child is identified as missing, staff will act immediately:

1. Notify the Supervisor/Designate and alert appropriate staff that a child is missing.
2. Confirm the child's identity and determine the child's last known location, time last seen, clothing, and any other relevant information.
3. Conduct an immediate search of the classroom, washrooms, sleeping areas, playground, outdoor areas, hallways, storage areas, and other locations where the child may be.
4. Check all exits and access points to determine whether the child may have left the premises.
5. Maintain supervision of all other children. Staff will ensure that the remaining children continue to be supervised while additional staff participate in the search.
6. The Supervisor/Designate will coordinate the search and assign staff specific responsibilities.
7. If the child is not located immediately, staff will expand the search to the surrounding area as appropriate.

8. Emergency services/police will be contacted without delay when circumstances indicate that the child may have left the premises, the child's whereabouts are unknown, or the child cannot be located promptly.
9. The child's parent/guardian will be notified as soon as reasonably possible, while the search and emergency response continue.
10. Staff will cooperate fully with emergency services and follow their directions until the child is located and confirmed safe.

Notification and Serious Occurrence Reporting

Under Ontario Regulation 137/15, an incident in which a child receiving care goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised is considered a serious occurrence, whether or not the child is subsequently found.

The centre will:

- Notify the child's parent/guardian of the incident and provide appropriate information regarding the response.
- Notify the Ministry in accordance with serious occurrence reporting requirements.
- Complete the required serious occurrence documentation within the required timeframe.
- Post the required serious occurrence summary in accordance with Ontario Regulation 137/15.
- Document the circumstances of the incident, actions taken, notifications made, and any follow-up or corrective actions required.

Once the Child Is Located

When the child is located, staff will immediately ensure the child's safety and determine whether first aid or medical attention is required. The parent/guardian will be updated regarding the child's condition and the circumstances of the incident.

The Supervisor/Designate will ensure that the incident is fully documented and that any necessary follow-up measures are implemented.

Review and Prevention

Following a missing-child incident, the centre will review the circumstances to identify contributing factors and determine whether changes are required to supervision practices, attendance procedures, physical security, staffing, transitions, or other safety measures.

Any identified concerns will be addressed promptly to reduce the likelihood of a similar incident occurring in the future.

Missing Child Drills

The centre will conduct missing-child drills, once every 3 months in accordance with Ontario licensing requirements and maintain a written record of each drill for at least 12 months.

Drills will be conducted in a manner that supports staff preparedness while maintaining the safety and well-being of the children. Drill records will include the date, circumstances simulated, staff involved, response actions, and any improvements identified.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for immediately reporting any concern that a child may be missing. Staff must not delay notifying the Supervisor/Designate while attempting to locate the child independently.

The priority in every situation is to act immediately, maintain supervision of the other children, initiate the search, contact emergency services when required, notify the parent/guardian, and ensure the child's safe return.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All staff, volunteers and members have the responsibility and obligation to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect promptly to the Children's Aid Society.

Abuse is defined and includes the following:

- To suffer physical harm as a result of another person
- To be sexually molested or sexually exploited
- To require but not be provided with medical treatment

The following is quoted from the Government of Ontario pamphlet Your Responsibility under the Child and Family Services Act, Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect:

"If a person has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection, the person must promptly report the suspicion and the information upon which it is based to a children's aid society. The person who has the reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is or may be in need of protection must make the report directly to a children's aid society. The person must not rely on anyone else to report on his or her behalf.

You do not need to be sure that a child is or may be in need of protection to make a report to a children's aid society. "Reasonable grounds" are what an average person, given his or her training, background and experience, exercising normal and honest judgment, would suspect. Any professional or official who fails to report a suspicion that a child is or may be in need of protection, where the information on which that suspicion is based was obtained in the course of his or her professional or official duties, is liable on conviction to a fine of up to \$1000."

A Serious Occurrence form only needs to be submitted if the allegation or abuse or neglect has been made against an employee of ABC Nursery School.

Positive Child Guidance

Positive Child Guidance refers to efforts intended to model appropriate behavior. Teachers, volunteers, placement students, and parents will model positive interactions for children. Positive Child Guidance also includes any efforts to encourage, produce, and maintain appropriate and acceptable behavior.

Prohibited Practices

Staff, volunteer, placement student, and members at ABC must **NOT** use any of the following prohibited practices to manage a child behavior:

- (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 center 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.

Safeguarding Children

To strengthen protection of children in all child care settings, additional Criminal Code (Canada) offences are being prescribed in regulation for the purposes of section 9 of the CCEYA.

Anyone working in or providing licensed child care who has been convicted of below-noted offences must notify their licensee immediately and cannot continue working in or providing child care.

- Section 152 invitation to sexual touching - Section 153 sexual exploitation - Section 153.1 sexual exploitation of person with a disability - Section 160(1)(2)(3) bestiality - Section 162 voyeurism - Section 162.1 publication of intimate image without consent - Section 170 parent or guardian procuring sexual activity - Section 171.1 making sexually explicit materials available to a child - Section 172.1 luring a child - Section 172.2 agreement or arrangement sexual offence against a child - Section 271 sexual assault - Section 272 sexual assault with weapon, threats to a third party or bodily harm - Section 273 aggravated sexual assault - Section 281 abduction of person under 14 - Section 286.1(1) obtaining sexual services for consideration - Section 286.1(2) obtaining sexual services for consideration from an individual under the age of 18

To provide greater clarity and protection for children, the list of prohibited practices will be expanded to include sexual abuse, sexual misconduct and prescribed sexual acts (as defined under the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007). The rules related to prohibited practices apply to all staff, all students and volunteers.

Recommended Behavior Management Techniques

When interacting with children, teachers, students and volunteers will practice the following:

- Praise: encouraging and positive comments and reminders to the children of acceptable behavior
- Ignorance: many behaviors can be ignored; no attention is given including warnings or reprimands
- Positive redirection: children having a difficult time managing in a particular play area can be redirected to another activity
- Offering choice: two options are given and children are encouraged to make their own choice and follow through with their decision
- Clear language: educators get on the children's level, use words age-appropriate words and short sentences, and speak clearly and slowly
- Problem solving: children are encouraged by the teachers to come up solutions to the problem they are experiencing; educators guide students to come up with a plan to put these strategies into practice

Severe behavior problems – If a child displays severe behavioral problems beyond the capability and control of the Teacher and safety of the children, assistance shall be sought by an appropriate authority i.e. Resource Teacher. In some circumstances ABC reserves the right to terminate registration of the child if they are unable to maintain a safe classroom for all children.

Prohibited Practices and Positive Child Guidance Policy Monitoring

All staff, volunteers, placement students, and parents must sign the Prohibited Practices and Positive Child Guidance Policy acknowledging that the policy has been reviewed, and that the policy is understood and will be adhered to.

If any individual involved with the Co-operative fails to comply with the above regulations, it will be necessary for the Supervisor to take the following measures:

- Conduct an interview with those involved to discuss what occurred
- Prepare a written description of what occurred, sign/date and file in a locked Cabinet
- Contact MoE within 24 hours, if necessary, to report the incident and inform them as to the final outcome of the incident
- Inform the President as soon as possible. The President will hold an Executive meeting to evaluate the best course of action.
- The parent/student/volunteer/staff member in question will not assist at the school until the President, with consent from the Board of Directors, states in writing they may do so
- A record of each review will be kept for at least three (3) years

Parent Issues and Concerns

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

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

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

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business days. 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.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, placement 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

ABC 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 Board of Directors.

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff/Board of Directors in responding to issue/concern:
Program Related E.g: schedule, indoor/ outdoor program activities, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to a staff member.	When possible, address the issue/concern at the time it is raised and notify the Supervisor while also documenting the resolution in the Daily Log. If further discussion is needed: - Schedule a meeting with the parent/guardian to discuss the issue/concern within 2 business days of receiving the issue or concern. - Request the parent/guardian to submit the issue/concern in writing to the school - Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:
Operations-Related E.g: fees, wait lists, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to the Chairperson or Board of Directors.	

Staff-Related E.g: conduct of staff, volunteers, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to the individual directly or Supervisor. Note: All issues or concerns about the conduct of the staff/volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Supervisor/Board of Directors as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	• the date and time the issue/concern was received; • the name of the person who received the issue/concern; • the name of the person reporting the issue/concern; • the details of the issue/concern; and • any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral - Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern in writing.
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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 members of the executive. See contact info below.

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.

Child Care Centre Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: **Awesome Beginnings Cooperative Nursery School**

Date Policy and Procedures Established: **November 20, 2023**

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: **November 24, 2023**

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the child care centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy

General

- **ABC Nursery School** will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.
- **ABC Nursery School** will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

Additional Policy Statements

Children may only be released to an adult. Either the parent/guardian or an adult that has been approved by the parent/guardian. Emergency contacts are on file. Staff will follow the safe dismissal procedure if a child is being released to an adult that is not the parent/guardian.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - o greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - o ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on **the registration forms** or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - o document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written communication book.
 - o sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - o inform **the supervisor and all other program staff** and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than **10:30 am**. Staff shall send the parent/guardian an email either via SeeSaw or school email. Staff must contact the parent/guardian once and leave a message. **Staff must contact the parent/guardian once and leave a**

message. If no response is received by 1pm staff will contact the parent/guardian again. Staff must confirm absence with an adult.

- o **If staff are not able to make contact with an adult to confirm the child's absence, staff should report to the centre supervisor and president of the board.**
- o Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
 - o confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - o where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or time frame that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up **within 15 minutes of this time frame, the supervisor or program staff** shall contact the parent/guardian **via phone call** and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
 - o Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, **staff must call again and leave a message for the parent/guardian.** Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
 - o Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child **the staff shall call the emergency contacts listed on the child's registration/emergency contact forms.**

Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by **2:15pm**, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while a second staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall begin contacting authorized individuals listed on the child's file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 3pm, the staff shall proceed with contacting the

local Children's Aid Society (CAS) **905-522-1121**. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

ABC Nursery School Outdoor Play Space Safety Policy and Procedures

Purpose

Outdoor play is an integral part of the daily schedule and plays an important role in the development of children's overall well-being. In order for children to thrive in outdoor play, it is crucial that there be sufficient toys and equipment for children to engage in active play and that educators engage as active participants in the play.

The *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* document describes how children thrive in programs where they can engage in vigorous physical play in natural outdoor spaces and playgrounds that present manageable levels of challenge. In addition to providing physical benefits, active play outdoors strengthens functioning in cognitive areas such as perception, attention, creative problem solving, and complex thinking.

While these environments need to be safe, it is also important for them to provide children with interesting opportunities for a reasonable degree of risk-taking.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the responsibilities of the licensee, staff and volunteers in ensuring that the outdoor play space provides a safe and well-supervised environment for children's play.

Policy

General

- ABC Nursery School will ensure that there are enough play materials available that are appropriate for the children's age and learning and developmental needs during outdoor play.
- The maximum capacity of the playground will not be exceeded at any time.

Play Space Inspections/Checks

- Outdoor play space and surfacing checks will be conducted on a daily, monthly and annual basis.
- All play space inspections will be documented. All documentation and reports will be filed by the

educators in the outdoor play space safety section of the teacher binder.

- The licensee will ensure proper insurance coverage

Repairs and Maintenance

- All items identified in the checklists as requiring repair will be documented in the repair log and repaired or addressed in a timely manner. Note: the amount of time required will depend on the scope of the work and who is required to conduct the repairs.
- Documentation on the repair log will also include:
 - the date the issue was identified;
 - documentation of what steps and efforts have been taken to address any identified items which cannot be repaired immediately due to circumstances out of the child care centre's control
 - date the related repairs were completed.
- Where outdoor play space repairs cannot be completed immediately, the area or space requiring repairs will be sectioned off to prevent children from using that area in order to protect their safety and reduce the risk of injury. Children will be supervised at all times during outdoor play to ensure that they do not approach or use spaces that are sectioned off pending repairs.
 - If damage or vandalism occurs photos will be taken for documentation and a report will be made to the police. Documentation of damage and police report will be kept on file.

Supervision

- Children will be supervised at all times during outdoor play.
- Staff will position themselves throughout the playground and rotate their position where required to ensure children can be visually supervised while engaging in play.
- Staff to child ratios will be maintained on the playground at all times.
- Staff will ensure that all gates are securely closed at all times.

Documentation and Report Retention

- All documentation and reports related to the outdoor play space will be:
 - Kept for three years from the date they were created and/or updated (whichever date is most recent)

- Made available for Ministry staff to review at all times.

Play Space Safety Procedures

Timeline	Steps to Follow
Daily: before using the outdoor play space	1. Staff or Volunteer must: a) walk around the entire outdoor play space to look for and identify hazards and defects as indicated in the daily playground inspection checklist b) remove any garbage, hazards or defects using gloves c) complete the play space inspection checklist, sign and date it d) file the play space inspection checklist in the play space safety section of the teacher binder . Where hazards or defects cannot immediately be removed or repaired, Staff or Volunteer must: a) report the hazards or defects to the supervisor who will log and maintain the information in the repair log and take appropriate action to initiate any repairs. b) Section off the area with the hazard/defect if it poses a hazard to children. 2. In preparation to exit the nursery school to use the outdoor play space, staff must: a) ensure all emergency medication/epi-pens accompanies children, where applicable; b) ensure all emergency contact information is readily available - c). ensure the attendance record is readily available d) ensure that the allergy and dietary restriction lists are readily available e) ensure appropriate steps related to environmental factors have been implemented (e.g.: children are appropriately dressed for the weather) f) conduct head counts prior to leaving the nursery school, and while transitioning them to the outdoor play space. g) prior to leaving the nursery school entrance ensure all children are holding the walking rope and no moving cars or hazards in the parking lot

Timeline	Steps to Follow
Daily: while using the outdoor play space	1. Staff must: a) position themselves in areas that ensure that all children and areas of the play space can be properly supervised at all times b) complete head counts of children every 10 minutes c) implement the goals and approaches of the program statement, such as engaging with the children in play Where a child is injured on the playground, staff must: a) administer first aid, where appropriate b) contact emergency services, where appropriate c) notify the parent of the child immediately, where appropriate, or at dismissal time d) complete an accident report and provide a copy to the child's parent, photocopy the report place copy in child's file e) follow the serious occurrence policy and procedures, where appropriate.
Daily: When returning from the outdoor play space	1. Staff must: a) conduct head count prior to returning indoors from the outdoor play space, while transitioning indoors, and upon returning to the indoor space. b) Ensure that attendance records, emergency medication, epi-pens and children's emergency contact information is brought indoors with the group. c) prior to leaving the outdoor play space ensure all children are holding the walking rope and no cars are moving in the parking lot
Monthly	1. Staff must: a) walk around the entire outdoor play space to look for and identify hazards and defects as indicated in the monthly play space inspection checklist b) remove any hazards or defects, where possible c) complete the monthly inspection checklist, sign and date it

Timeline	Steps to Follow
	d) file the play space inspection checklist in the play space safety section of the teacher binder Where hazards or defects cannot immediately be removed or repaired, Staff must: a) report the hazards or defects to the supervisor who will log and maintain the information in the repair log and take appropriate action to initiate any repairs. b) Section off the area with the hazard/defect if it poses a hazard to children. 2. Supervisor must: a) review outdoor injuries and accidents that have occurred to look for trends b) take appropriate action to prevent similar injuries and accidents from happening in the future. 3. Supervisor must: a) review the repair logs and follow up on any outstanding identified issues still requiring repair.
Annually	1. Where the play space does not have fixed equipment staff must: a) walk around the entire outdoor play space to look for and identify hazards and defects as indicated in the annual play space inspection checklist b) remove any hazards or defects, where possible c) complete the annual inspection checklist, sign and date it d) develop a written plan to address any hazards and/or defects, including a timeline to address the issues identified during the inspection.

Timeline	Steps to Follow
	2. Where hazards or defects cannot immediately be removed or repaired, staff must: a) report the hazards or defects to the supervisor who will log and maintain the information in the repair log and take appropriate action to initiate any repairs. b) section off the area with the hazard/defect if it poses a hazard to children.

Glossary

Individual authorized to pick-up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick-up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Regulatory Requirements: Ontario Regulation 137/15

Safe arrival and dismissal policy

50. Every licensee shall ensure that each child care centre it operates and each premises where it oversees the provision of home child care has a policy respecting the safe arrival and dismissal of children that,

- (a) provides that a child may only be released from the child care centre or home child care premises,
 - (i) to individuals indicated by a child's parent, or
 - (ii) in accordance with written permission from a child's parent to release the child from the program at a specified time without supervision; and
- (b) sets out the steps that must be taken if,
 - (i) a child does not arrive as expected at the centre or home child care premises, or
 - (ii) a child is not picked up as expected from the centre or home child care premises.

Contacts & Roles

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Board of Directors	
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Treasurer	abctreasurercarlisle@gmail.com
Secretary	abcsecretarycarlisle@gmail.com
Executive Officer	abcexecutiveofficer@gmail.com
Additional Contacts	
Hamilton Children's Aid Society	(905) 522-1121
Catholic Children's Aid Society of Hamilton	(905) 525-2012
Hamilton Public Health	(905) 546-2424 x 3577
Ministry Program Advisor	(289) 244-1058
Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk	1-877-510-5333 childcare_ontario@ontario.ca