



**Parents Handbook
2022 - 2023**

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Introduction

**Please note that many changes have been made to our normal operations due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These changes affect things like our snack program and our programs offered, and our tuition fees have also been adjusted to reflect a change to the length of our school year. We expect to return to normal operations whenever it is possible to do so and adhere to public health guidelines.*

Royal City Cooperative Preschool, Inc. officially came into being on March 12, 1975 when former *Winnie the Pooh Nursery School* became incorporated under a new name. The original school (*Winnie the Pooh*) dates back to the spring of 1969, at which time the facilities for preschool education were at a premium in Guelph. A group of mothers began meeting together to discuss the idea of forming their own school. A few months later, the idea became reality, and on September 22, 1969, *Winnie the Pooh*, Guelph's first cooperative nursery school, opened its doors.

Since then the school has undergone several changes. Membership has increased from 30 (two classes of 15 each) to what it is today. We have also had a move from the original premises in the Christian Reformed Church on Water Street to our present location in Harcourt United Church. Equipment and supplies have gradually been increased and upgraded and more time is devoted to fundraising and public relations. The school became incorporated in 1979. The most recent major change occurred with the arrival of full-day kindergarten in the province, as RCCP decided to increase the number of preschool places and eliminate our own JK/SK program.

We look back with pride at all of the change and growth that has occurred since the preschool's inception, and at the same time, we recognize that this progress has been made only as a result of the combined efforts and dedication of the teachers and families who have been so committed to our continued development and success over the years.

In one sense, the essential nature of the school has not changed. It is still a cooperative preschool; one in which the parents and teachers work together to provide an enriching preschool experience for their children, and to build a community that makes this possible. For this reason, and because there are many different families (with different ideas, interests, and ambitions) within this community, communication and a spirit of collaboration are essential.

To answer some of your initial questions, and to acquaint you with some of the basic concepts, policies and procedures of the school, the Board of Directors has prepared this "handbook". It is intended to be used as a general guide to our program. Complete policies are available at the school and on our website.

To all of you, both old and new members, a hearty welcome to **Royal City Cooperative Preschool**. Here's to another wonderful year!

Royal City Cooperative Preschool

Program Statement

At Royal City Cooperative Preschool (RCCP), we aim to inspire every child to flourish, and all contributions are valued. We are committed to developing the whole child – physically, emotionally, socially and intellectually. We believe that each child is an individual who is competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Each preschooler is treated with respect and encouragement.

Our program statement will follow the Minister’s policy statement on programming and pedagogy. Our preschool will follow the “How does Learning Happen” document, which is framed around the four foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. These foundations are important for children to experience each and every day to ensure positive development.

There are a variety of programs available. Each program includes age specific activities in forms of intellectual, emotional, developmental and sensory initiatives. Being a co-operative preschool, families are involved in the operation of the school and daily activities. We have four different classes. MWF AM class is specifically designed for a mix aged of preschoolers, 30-48 months, This class may also have 4 young spots meaning children who are 24 months by the September in which they start. We have a toddler class which runs T/TH AM and is for those who are 20 months by the September in which they start and younger than 30 months. Our afternoon preschool groups are for those older preschoolers heading off to JK the following year. Our toddler class and AM and PM Preschool Classes aim to provide activities to learn through play in a classroom setting.

Our program strives to build good relationships with the children and their families through positive, caring interactions. We help the children feel safe and secure in their environment and with the individuals they interact with. The daily program in each class is designed to meet the developing and maturing needs of the children as they progress from solitary play to an awareness of other children and on to a desire to cooperate with them in play.

‘Play is a child’s work’. Preschool-age is a time when a child’s brain is rapidly developing; children learn easily and well at this age. Children are exposed to a variety of activities to support their physical, emotional and intellectual growth. Each day includes free play, circle, songs, stories, creative experiences and indoor or outdoor gross motor play, weather permitting. Children are able to participate in dramatic play, tactile activities, a reading corner, puzzles and games, blocks and vehicles and a science table.

We have qualified, enthusiastic and caring professionals who have extensive training and background in the field of Early Childhood Education and another one holds a teachers degree specializing in Special Education. Three of our teachers are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators (in good standing). Our fourth teacher is registered with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) and is also in good standing. They believe that it is an extreme privilege to be trusted with the care of parents’ precious children.

Supporting positive interactions among children, and the staff

At RCCP, each child further develops the social skills that will be required of him/her throughout life: interacting with other children, and communicating in a positive way, learning how to wait, how to take turns, how to listen, being able to follow routine, how to problem- solve and to how to work in small and large groups. Some of the approaches used by the staff will be role modelling respectful, inclusive, positive interactions with children and other adults. We will redirect and guide children demonstrating how to resolve difficulties if there is conflict. We will engage in the children's play to demonstrate positive social skills including encouraging discussion and if conflict arises, helping them understand how their actions affect others. We will help the children identify their feelings and how to self regulate through conversation, modelling language skills and role playing. We will provide an environment that is full of experiences for children to explore and interact with others in play with a variety of play centres, craft materials, auditory materials, sensory materials, books, and songs.

Prohibited Practices:

- a. corporal punishment (which may include but is not limited to, hitting, spanking, slapping, pinching);
- b. physical restraint of children, including but not limited to confining to high chair, car seat, etc. for discipline or in lieu of supervision unless for the purposes described in the regulation (to prevent self-harm, harm to others and only until risk of harm/injury is no longer imminent);
- c. locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency.
- d. use of harsh, degrading measures or threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- e. depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
- f. inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Belonging

It is our aim to create an environment to welcome every child and their family and help them to feel comfortable as part of our preschool community.

An initial tour of the school, discussion around the needs of the child and roles of the parents in a co-operative setting all occur as part of our registration process. We invite all new registrants to come for a night of play in June.

An introduction of each child to one classroom teacher occurs prior to the start of the school year in the form of a visit in the child's home environment. This is an opportunity for the teacher to meet with the child and family and gather any information to help get to know the child and family better. The staff will use a warm and caring manner through body language and words when interacting with the children. They

will capitalize on opportunities for one-to-one interactions to make connections and build relationships with each of the children.

We will strive to provide an inclusive environment by encouraging families to share their cultural beliefs and customs for holidays, and inviting them to come into the classroom.

Through observations and documentation we will get to know what the children are interested in, what brings them joy, and how they relate to others and the environment around them.

There is a year end picnic for all families to come together for celebration, A local park is chosen and we meet during our final class time for each class. We plan a Stay and Play at the school where families can come and enjoy time together in the rooms. We also try to plan other events for our school community and guests such as a family skating party, Christmas parties, and a family carnival where all families participate in a day with games, a silent auction and a children's raffle.

Engagement

The staff will engage in one on one play or with a group using eye to eye contact, modelling language skills, encouraging and asking questions during play. Staff will provide a wide variety of materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate. This will help us to observe and discover their interests and strengths and respond to them through further activities.

Staff will create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported and which is inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans. Staff will make experiences available by providing materials that allow the children's curiosity to be sparked, inviting them to investigate and explore. We intend to set out a variety of materials as a result of observations and documentation of previous days, to challenge their thinking and extend their play experiences. These materials may include loose parts, books, pictures, clip boards and pencil and paper in the various centres (ie: kitchen area, block area). We will provide active play areas as well as quieter areas, such as a book corner with comfy cushions, where the children can feel a sense of calm and comfort. These experiences are intended to support each child, recognizing that they are each learning and developing at a different level.

We welcome all families to share family traditions, holidays and customs throughout the year within the classroom. This may be through bringing in articles to display in our World Corner, for dramatic play, and/or during our group times.

We intend to include those with individualized plans through support using visual aids, and special equipment available either through Inclusion Support Services or by other means. Where Inclusion Support is needed and available, it will be implemented. The program will accommodate all children according to their needs, sensitivities and choices.

Engagement with the parents in our co-operative is important as well. In addition to participation in co-operative duties, we encourage ongoing communication at drop-off and pick-up times and scheduled

meeting times.

Fostering exploration, play and inquiry

The child's exploration and inquiry is fostered through playing, with guidance and feedback from the program staff as appropriate. The staff will encourage the children to ask questions, will pose questions to them, and help them to research answers through photos, books, the tablet or computer. The below-mentioned indoor and outdoor environments are available to facilitate this. These environments inspire the children to initiate discovery.

Indoor play

Typical indoor play activities include craft room activities involving paints, paste, play dough, crafts, science table, books, puzzles, sensory play (water, sand). A second room also has activities involving dramatic play, blocks, puppets, cars/trucks, dolls, dress up, and a play kitchenette.

Outdoor play

A dedicated fenced playground includes a large climbing apparatus with slide, a sand box, riding toys and a playhouse. We also have access to a gymnasium where children are provided with balls, hockey sticks, balance beams, tricycles, ride on toys and a mini-trampoline. Children are in the playground or gymnasium for free play at the end of each program.

Staff will respect the needs of each individual child for active play and quieter activities, allowing opportunities for individual play, one on one play with peers or staff, as well as small or large group play times.

Observations, Documentation and review of activities

We observe the children daily with the specific goal of watching for their interests and things they are curious about. The notes of observations guide our program activities. We discuss our observations regularly in order to incorporate the children's interests into our days and to ensure our activities follow the curiosity of the children. We also use our observations to create documentation and display for parents. Various framed photo journals and comment documents are displayed in the classroom outlining the activities observed and the interaction with the program staff and fellow students. These are shared with parents and children. Daily we try to send photos via email of what their children are engaged in each day and a quick observation explanation.

Exposure to the community

We generally have 1-2 field trips per year for our preschool classes. Each family transports their own child(ren) to and from the field trip. We do neighborhood walks observing signs of the different seasons. We invite our families to share any experiences with the children in our classroom. We have been fortunate to have special guests from the community into the classroom,

such as members of the fire department, police officers, and dentists.

Professional development and planning

Each program staff member is an active participant in ongoing educational opportunities and professional workshops in order to enhance their knowledge, growth and development as teachers responsible for guiding young children and their parents. The preschool will budget for staff to attend a minimum of 10 hrs of professional development. Staff are encouraged to attend workshops and conferences set up by the Quality Child Care Initiative of Guelph, online courses, or other learning opportunities. Staff are also involved in the Co-operative Preschool Network meetings that occur 2-3 times a year in the community. The Supervisor attends Operator Meetings and Supervisor Meetings whenever possible. Knowledge of the Emergent Curriculum Approach, Continuum of Development and Four Foundations of Learning, guide our planning.

Communication & Interaction between the Board, Teachers and Parents

General information regarding the school and its programs are available on the school website. An introduction of each child to one classroom teacher occurs prior to the start of the school year in the child's home environment. Communication between all teachers in the program and the child's parent or guardian occurs regularly during pick-up and drop-off to the program on an informal basis. Twice yearly Annual General Meetings (AGM) are held, which all teachers and members of the co-operative are invited to and expected to attend. The board and teachers meet on a monthly basis. One newsletter per semester is distributed to parents outlining past events and teacher's reflections. Information regarding trips or other special events are communicated via a letter home in the child's bag.

Any comment, question, or suggestion from a parent/guardian is welcomed by the teachers if it represents a programming matter, or by a member of the board if it involves administration of the school. A Parent Handbook is available to all members of the preschool on the school website. A suggestion box is provided in the classroom as another means to enable this communication.

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

We meet all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and Wellington Dufferin Guelph Public Health. Each staff member possesses a Standard, Level C First Aid CPR / Infant and child, as well as a Food Handlers Certificate given by our local Public Health Department.

We are involved with and have access to support from the Canada Mental Health Association, Kids Ability and Early Years Professional Resource Centre and a Resource Consultant through the County of Wellington. Also if any parent wished to reach out for help about any concerns about their child they can call Here4Kids 1-844-454-3711. You must leave a message and they will return your call.

We provide opportunities to promote healthy bodies through daily indoor and outdoor activities. One of the parental roles in our school is “shopper” for snack. These parents will be provided with the shopping list of what to buy and bring it directly to the school. Our menu is given to each family, posted in the classroom and is available on our website. The daily snack menu that follows the Canada Food Guide has been approved by dieticians from the WDGPH. All meal preparation is done at school. The children sit together and eat snack in a group setting.

All allergies and food limitations are taken seriously and are posted in the classroom and in the Emergency books. All anaphylactic plans for individual children are reviewed by all staff and volunteers and posted in the main classroom. Our anaphylaxis policy is also reviewed by all staff and volunteers before beginning employment. Our anaphylaxis policy and playground policy are available to view online, and parents can speak to our program staff at any time.

Implementation and Review of the Program Statement

We will review our Program Statement annually with staff, students and volunteers, and the Board of Directors, as well as anytime that changes to the statement are made. All staff, students and volunteers, and members of the Board of Directors shall review this statement prior to working at the preschool or whenever the program statement is modified. The comments and feedback from the parent survey will be reviewed and included in discussions, and staff performance appraisals will reflect the strategies outlined in the Program Statement.

Ongoing informal conversations, as well as monthly discussions, reflections, and continuous observations, will occur among staff to ensure they are supporting children’s learning and development, and planning accordingly for the future.

Address Royal City Cooperative Preschool Inc.
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87 Dean Ave., Guelph, ON, N1G 1L3

Phone Number (519) 837-2535

Email Address rccpmail@gmail.com

Website www.royalcitycooperativepreschool.com

Parking Park behind the Church in the parking lot. The door beside the playground (west side) is the entrance to the school.

Teachers

Janice Walters (Supervisor)
Dianne Dobbie-Legesse (Acting Supervisor)
Jean Downs
Stephanie Vanderwoerd
Stephanie Li

The Board of Directors for the current year is elected at the previous year's spring General Meeting and all other personnel are appointed during the summer. The current year's Board of Directors may be found on the school's website. The list of personnel jobs will be distributed on registration night.

School Year

First Term: first Monday after Labour Day to last day of public school in December (as per Upper Grand District School Board calendar)

Second Term: first day of public school in January (as per Upper Grand District School Board calendar) to the third Friday in June

School Holidays

Thanksgiving, Christmas Break, Family Day, March Break, Good Friday, Easter Monday, and Victoria Day. (All Holidays/Breaks as per Upper Grand District School Board calendar except for PD days).

School Hours

Toddler Class Tues/Thurs	9:00am - 11:30am
AM Preschool Mon/Wed/Fri	9:00am – 11:45am
PM Preschool 1 Mon/Wed/Fri	1:00pm - 4:00pm
PM Preschool 2 Tues/Thurs	1:00pm - 4:00pm

****Please adhere to the set start and end time of your child’s program. Children should enter the classroom no earlier than the start time, and must be picked up no later than the end time of the program.****

Snacks

A snack for the entire class will be purchased by parents who have been assigned the “shopping job”, The snack menu will be given out at the start of the year and will indicate what to bring and quantities. All food preparation will be done at the school, according to Ministry of Health Guidelines for food preparation. The children sit together and eat snack at the same time. Should your child have any allergies and/or dietary restrictions, please be sure to indicate it in the registration package. You may send in your own individual snacks in those situations. All snacks must be *peanut-free* and brought in their original packaging.

Transportation

Each parent is responsible for making transportation arrangements for his or her own child. You are encouraged to consider carpooling with another parent(s) in your class.

Unscheduled Late Pick-Ups

For pick-ups after the scheduled times, a late charge of \$5 per 15 minutes will be payable to the teacher in charge. After the second significantly late pick-up, the situation will be reported to the Board of Directors and the family involved may be requested to withdraw from the school.

Unauthorized Persons

Please indicate ALL authorized person(s) under “release information” on the registration form in your child’s registration package. If someone other than a parent (or another regular pick-up arrangement) is to pick up your child, please inform the teacher and leave a telephone number of someone to contact in case of emergency. For the safety of your children, any visitors to the school need to be pre-arranged with the teacher. Unannounced, unauthorized visitors will not be permitted into the school.

Co-operative Duty

Every family that joins Royal City Cooperative Preschool will:

- receive a “school job”/Personnel Assignment for the year
- be obligated to complete one housekeeping duty (school clean-up) during the school year
- be expected to attend the general membership meetings held twice yearly

- contribute one hour of volunteer time at the RCCP annual carnival fundraiser

Please review the Letter of Commitment in the Registration Package.

Parent Job Assignments

The board member responsible for Scheduling assigns a school job to each family on registration night, or upon registration if enrolling mid-year. The Scheduler gives consideration to the preferences expressed on the *Parent Job Assignment* survey completed after registration. Every school job has an important role in the function of the school. A \$150 Duty Cheque will be collected from each member upon registration. This cheque, dated for June 1st of the attending school year, will only be cashed if duties are not completed by the member or a representative. Otherwise, all Duty Cheques will be returned or destroyed at the end of the school year.

Orientation Night

Orientation Night is an evening meeting held one week prior to school starting. Information pertaining to your child's program will be given out, registration packages are checked for completeness, personnel jobs are distributed, and all remaining tuition fees and forms are collected. You will receive details of orientation night in the summer. If you are unable to make the evening, you are responsible for making other arrangements to ensure you have submitted all necessary fees and forms before your child's start date.

Parent Involvement at Royal City Cooperative Preschool

Some of the ways in which we invite and encourage parents to participate in the preschool and be part of the learning and development of their child include:

- Participation in a co-operative duty
- Monthly calendars sent home
- Photos of child's learning at preschool shared with parents by email
- Parent bulletin board
- Attendance at 2 General Membership Meetings per year, each of which includes a guest speaker on a topic relevant to parents - child development, community programs, school preparation, etc.
- Newsletters
- Invitations to special events – Orientation Night, field trips, Holiday parties, Special Visitor Night, Family Day Skating Party, Spring Carnival, Year End Celebrations

Admission and Tuition Fees

A \$50 non-refundable registration fee is due at the time that registration packages are submitted in order to reserve your child's space.

The following items are due at Orientation Night, or upon registration if beginning mid-year:

- A duty cheque of \$150, post dated for June 1st of the school year. The duty cheque is only cashed if Co-operative Duties are not completed by the member or a representative (see the Letter of Commitment in the registration package for further details).
- Post-dated tuition cheques or other payment arrangements for the full year's tuition are due on orientation night in September, or upon registration if beginning mid-year. Payments can be made in the following 3 ways:
 - 1 One cheque for the entire year.
 - 2 Two cheques, one for the first term dated the first day of the school year, and one for the second term, dated Jan 1st.
 - 3 Ten cheques, one for each month, dated the first of each month of the school year.

The tuition fee schedule is sent out to families in the summer, prior to orientation night. The tuition fee schedule for the following year is proposed by the Board of Directors, and approved by the general membership at the November general meeting.

A late payment/NSF fine of \$10 will be levied each time a tuition payment is overdue.

All cheques should be made payable to Royal City Cooperative Preschool. (In full. Please do not make cheques payable to "RCCP"). Any questions regarding fees should be directed to the Treasurer.

Program Descriptions

Fees for 2022- 2023

<u>Class</u>	<u>Monthly Tuition</u>	<u>Snack Fee*</u>	<u>Covid Cleaning Fee**</u>	<u>Total</u>
AM Preschool (MWF am)	\$280.00	\$5.00	\$20.00	\$305.00
PM Preschool 1 - (MWF pm)	\$270.00	\$5.00	\$20.00	\$295.00
PM Preschool 2 (T/TH pm)	\$205.00	\$5.00	\$20.00	\$230.00
Toddler (T/TH am)	\$220.00	\$5.00	\$20.00	\$245.00

The Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC)

Royal City Cooperative Preschool has chosen to opt-out of CWELCC for the 2022-23 school year after considering the unknowns and weighing the many positives and negatives of the program. We plan to learn how similar preschools fare with CWELCC and will consider joining the agreement the following year.

Toddler Program

The toddler program is intended as a first exposure to school for your child. This program is structured with your child's age and developmental capabilities in mind, whereby activities and routines are meant for a toddler. Children in this program are exposed to a variety of activities where freedom of choice is given. Children learn routines such as "tidy up", washing hands, and transitioning between activities. The circle time is suitable for a toddler's attention span, at which time songs, books and themes are discussed.

- Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00am-11:30am.
- For ages 20 to 30 months as of September 1st
- 10 spaces, 2 teachers

Toddler Program Schedule

09:00 - 9:50am	Main Classroom Activities
09:50 - 10:00am	Wash Hands – Bathroom Time
10:00 -10:20am	Snack Time
10:20 -11:00am	Block Room Activities
11:00 -11:15am	Circle Time
11:15 -11:30am	Outside Play or Gym Play (depending on weather)

Preschool Program

The preschool program is geared to start preparing children for a kindergarten program. Routines are followed with play and engagement a priority, and with freedom of choice in age appropriate activities. We follow a play-based curriculum and follow the interests of the children throughout the year. These interests are explored in further detail through art experiences, circle time, and activities. Special days and events are celebrated throughout the year. Some examples of these are the opportunity to dress in costumes for Halloween, Christmas Parties, Valentines, Beach Day, Bike Day, and Year End Parties. We also like to involve all family cultures and invite parents and children to share experiences and traditions through circle times or other visits to the preschool. Classes have a maximum class size of 16 - 18 students.

AM Preschool Class

- Monday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00am-11:45am
- For ages 24 to 36 months as of September 1st (only 4 spots available for ages 24-30 months)
- 16 spaces, 2 teachers

AM Preschool Schedule

9:00-10:30	Main Classroom and Block Room Activities
10:30	Wash Hands and Bathroom
10:40 - 11	Snack Time
11:00-11:20	Circle Time
11:20-11:45pm	Outdoor Play or Gym (depending on weather)

PM Preschool Class 1

- Monday/Wednesday/Friday 1:00pm-4:00pm.
- For ages 36 months and up as of December 31st
- 16 spaces, 2 teachers

PM Preschool Class 2

- Tuesday/Thursday 1:00pm-4:00pm.
- For ages 36 months and up as of December 31st
- 16 spaces, 2 teachers

PM Preschool Schedule

1:00-1:15pm	Free Play in Block Room
1:30pm	Group Time and picking Star of the Day
1:45 – 2:40	Main Class Room Activities – Free Play

2:40 – 2:50	Washing hands and Bathroom
2:50 – 3:10	Snack Time
3:10-3:30pm	Circle Time
3:30-4:00pm	Outdoor Play or Gym (depending on weather)

Main Classroom Activities: this includes painting easel, planned art activities, collage table with glue and scissors, and materials to create as they wish, play dough, cognitive games, science table, books, puzzles, sensory play (water, sand, pom poms etc.), and floor toys.

Block Room Activities: this includes dramatic play, blocks, puppets, cars/trucks, dolls, dress up, play kitchenette, etc.

Please Note: This is a typical scenario of a class; it may vary from day to day with priority given to the children's needs and engagement in play. We will not disrupt amazing play opportunities just for the sake of the schedule. Also if we feel that the children need more outdoor / gym time because energy levels are high, we may skip other activities in order to make this possible. Videos/DVDs and/or television are used occasionally (two times a year) to enhance curriculum during circle time.

Your Child At Preschool

What to bring to preschool:

Please label all articles of clothing, footwear, bags, and other objects brought to school.

* **School Bags:** Your child should come to class with a backpack or bag marked with his/her name, which will be used to take home things he/she has completed at school as well as any handouts (class schedule, newsletter, notices, etc.) intended for parents. Please send the bag to school each day and when it comes home, check to see whether there is anything in it. Bags are to be hung up on your child's labeled hook on the rack just inside the entrance. If your child still is using diapers please have extra diapers and wipes in their bag as well.

* **Clothing/Shoes:** Please dress your child in clothing that is washable, practical, and comfortable. Please bring rubber soled shoes or slippers for indoors. Outdoor clothing and footwear should be appropriate for the weather, including rubber boots for wet days and warm boots in winter, and as easy as possible for your child to manage themselves. Soiled footwear should be removed at the entrance doors and placed on the rubber mats, and coats are hung on the labelled hooks in the hallway. Please put any hats, mitts, etc., in the sleeve of your child's coat before hanging it up. We ask that each child keep an extra set of clothing in his/her backpack each day (in the event of accidents, spills, etc. and preferably in a ziplock bag to protect against glue and paint from art work), and an extra set of mittens during winter.

* Please discourage your child from bringing toys from home to play with at school.

Transitioning to Preschool

It is normal for both you and your child to feel some uncertainty about starting preschool. It may take some time for your child to adjust to a new environment, and at first, some children are reluctant to participate or stay on their own. The rate at which your child will adjust will depend on many things, including previous experiences, age, and individual needs. Here are some ideas to consider as you prepare for this transition:

* Talk to your child about what to expect when they go to preschool (teachers, friends, toys, painting, stories, etc.), and reassure them that you will return to pick them up. It can be helpful to make references to when in the day you will pick them up and what you will do together afterwards (eg. You will have some time to play, and then I will pick you up, we will go home for lunch, and then it will be naptime.)

* You are welcome to come and stay with your child at school until they feel reasonably secure. How long to stay and how to make the transition to leaving can be discussed with the teachers and adjusted according to your child's needs.

* It is okay for your child to just observe what's happening in the room or to play by themselves until they feel comfortable joining in a group activity. The teachers will help encourage participation in group activities but they will follow your child's lead and not force any child to participate until they are ready.

* Consider using items that are sent home to help talk to your child about preschool. Some possibilities are: sitting down with the calendar and talking about any events or special days coming up; using the snack schedule to discuss what your child ate today or your child's favourite school snack; or asking your child to tell you about how they created a piece of art that they brought home. Many families like to choose a

special place to display some of the art coming home, and doing so can also open up more opportunities for your child to continue thinking or talking about preschool with others.

* You and your child’s teachers are a team, working together to help your child have a positive preschool experience. Please do not hesitate to discuss any questions or concerns about your child’s adjustment to preschool with the teachers at any time in the school year.

Foundations for Learning in Early Childhood

Royal City Cooperative Preschool is licensed under the Ontario Ministry of Education, and as such, our program is built upon the following foundations for learning in Early Childhood:

Foundations	Goals for Children	Expectations for Programs
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.	Early childhood programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
Well-Being	Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.	Early childhood programs nurture children’s healthy development and support their growing sense of self.
Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses.	Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.
Expression	Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.	Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms.

Developmental Screening

During the preschool year, our teachers will be implementing the Nippising Developmental Screens. The teachers might also use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Developmental Checklist (ASQ) with guidance from any of our Support Services Consultants through the Growing Great Kids System of Care, and only with permission from the parents. The ASQ is a tool that covers all areas of development for each of the age groups in our programs.

Developmental screening is the practice of systematically looking for and monitoring signs that a young child may be delayed in one or more areas of development. Screening is not meant to establish a diagnosis for the child but rather

to help professionals determine whether more in-depth assessment is called for. Screening young children is an effective, efficient way for professionals to catch problems and start treatment when it does the most good- during the crucial early years when the child's brain and body are developing so rapidly.

Concerns About Development or Behaviours

Royal City Cooperative Preschool is an inclusive environment that strives to meet the needs of all students. We recognize that our programming plans an important part in the early childhood development of our students by providing an environment that is responsive, caring and stimulating that encourages children's learning and social development. Parents and teachers are encouraged to work cohesively to identify any developmental or behavioural disabilities and “at-risk” flags.

Parents who have concerns with any aspect of their child's development are encouraged to speak with the teachers at any time. With years of experience guiding, the teachers are able to discuss your concerns and provide examples of behaviours and development typical to your child's peer group.

When the concern is justified, the teachers, in collaboration with the child's parents will involve Canadian Mental Health Association.

Revised August 2019

Policies and Procedures

School Closing Policy

The school will close for the day if Guelph area schools are cancelled, and/or there are insufficient numbers in staffing. An email will be sent to all affected class members, and an announcement will be made on our Facebook page.

Updated September 2022

Wait List Policy

Children will be accepted into the preschool on a first-come basis in accordance with our registration procedures. If classes are full, children's names will be placed on a waiting list until a space is available. The content of the waitlist is kept confidential; however, parents may inquire about where their child stands on the list.

The membership chairperson will offer available spaces to the children on the list as the spaces become available, by contacting the parents via the information that was collected. The membership chairperson will follow the order of the waitlist for each class in such a manner that allows the preschool to fill available spaces to the maximum capacity (ie. if a full-time space is available for a given class, preference will be given to the first person on the waitlist requesting a full-time space, with those requesting part-time space receiving lower priority).

No registration fees will be collected until a spot is available for the child. Royal City Co-operative Preschool does not collect any money in order to be placed on the waiting list.

Updated August 2019

Withdrawal Policy

We regret the withdrawal of any family from our school and hope that if you and/or your child are having problems within the school, you will first consult with the teacher or any member of the Board of Directors so that we can work together to address any issues.

In the event a family wishes to withdraw their child from the preschool, 14 days notice is required. The withdrawal must be communicated to the board and the teachers as soon as possible so that duty schedules and class lists may be adjusted. All duties must be completed up to the point of withdrawal in order for the \$150 duty cheque to be returned or destroyed. Trading of duties or completing alternate duties may be arranged in order to fulfill duty commitments, with the approval of the Scheduling Chair.

If a child is withdrawn during the last two months of the school year, regardless of whether or not notice has been given, no refund in tuition fees shall be made unless the child can be replaced immediately.

A request for a partial withdrawal (ie. would like to attend 1 or 2 days instead of the full program) will only be considered if there are no wait-listed students requesting a full-time spot. If there is a wait list, the family may choose to continue paying tuition for the full program, or withdraw and be placed on the wait-list for a part-time spot should one become available.

In the event a family withdraws their child from the preschool, but then later decides to register again, they must follow the same registration process and the same registration/enrolment fees will apply. Any questions regarding withdrawal from the school should be directed to the Membership Chairperson.

Updated February 2019

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

Purpose

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

Definitions

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

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

Providing Snack From Home Policy

Where a food allergy or sensitivity is involved and where parents are choosing to send an alternate snack from home for their child:

- the snack provided must be nut-free
- the snack must be packed in a container labelled with the child's name on it
- if it is a food or drink that needs to be refrigerated, an ice pack must be used
- the labelled containers or lunch bags will be stored on the snack preparation table
- food allergy or sensitivity will be posted in the snack area
- the container or lunch bag will be sent back home in child's school bag each day

Policy

General

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

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the staff and Board of Directors of RCCP 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 five business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

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

Confidentiality

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

Conduct

Our centre 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 licensee.

Updated: Feb. 2018

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g: schedule, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the classroom staff directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 5 business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the date and time the issue/concern was received;
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Supervisor or Board of Directors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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.
<p>Staff, Supervisor and/or Board of Directors</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the individual directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the supervisor or Board of Directors <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported directly to the Child and Family Services of Guelph and Wellington County. 519-824-2410 or 1-800-265-8300</p>	<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 5 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the supervisor and/or Board of Directors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported directly to the Family and Child Services of Guelph and Wellington County. 519-824-2410 or 1-800-265-8300 	
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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 Board of Directors.

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

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

Contacts: Board of Directors contact information is posted on the Parent Information Board. Supervisor : Janice Walters 519-837-2535, Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

See Royal City Co-operative Preschool's policy – "Duty to Report / Suspected Child Abuse Policy"

Supervision of Students and Volunteers Policy

Purpose

Royal City Cooperative Preschool welcomes volunteers and students into the various programs offered in our child care program. We believe it is a valuable part in gaining experience in a child care environment. Volunteers and students also play an important role in supporting staff in the daily operation of child care programs.

This policy will provide supervising staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding volunteers and students for child care centres.

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

Policy

General

- Students and volunteers will always be supervised by an employee and never permitted to be alone with any child or group of children who receive child care.
- Students and volunteers will not be counted in staff to child ratios.

Student and Volunteer Supervision Procedures: Roles and Responsibilities

The licensee/designate must:

- Ensure that all applicable policies, procedures and individual plans are reviewed with students and/or volunteers before they start their educational placement or begin volunteering, annually thereafter and when changes occur to the policies, procedures and individualized plans to support appropriate implementation.
- Ensure that all students and/or volunteers have been trained on each child's individualized plan.
- Ensure that a vulnerable sector check (VSC) and annual offence declarations are on file for all students and/or volunteers in accordance with the child care centre's criminal reference check policy and procedures and Ontario Regulation 137/15.
- Ensure that expectations are reviewed with students and/or volunteers including, but not limited to

- how to report their absence;
- how to report concerns about the program
- Inform students and/or volunteers that they are never to be included in staff to child ratios or left alone with children.
- Appoint supervising staff to the students and/or volunteers, and inform them of their supervisory responsibilities.
- Inform students and/or volunteers of their duty to report suspected child abuse or neglect under the Child and Family Services Act.

The supervising staff must:

- Ensure that students/volunteers are never included in staff to child ratios.
- Ensure that students/volunteers are supervised at all times and never left alone with children.
- Introduce students and/or volunteers to parents/guardians.
- Provide an environment that facilitates and supports students' and/or volunteers' learning and professional development.
- Provide students and/or volunteers with clear expectations of the program in accordance with the established program statement and program statement implementation policy.
- Provide students and/or volunteers with feedback on their performance.
- Work collaboratively with the student's practicum supervising teacher.
- Monitor and notify the centre supervisor/director of any student and or volunteer misconduct or contraventions with the centre's policies, procedures, prohibited practices or individual plans (where applicable) in accordance with the child care centre's written process for monitoring compliance and contraventions.

Students and/or volunteers must:

- Maintain professionalism and confidentiality at all times, unless otherwise required to implement a policy, procedure or individualized plan.
- Notify the supervisor or designate if they have been left alone with children or have any other concerns about the child care program (e.g. regarding staff conduct, program statement implementation, the safety and well-being of children, etc.).

- Submit all required information and documentation to the licensee, supervisor or designate prior to commencing placement or volunteering, such as a valid VSC.
- Review and implement all required policies, procedures and individualized plans, and sign and date a record of review, where required.
- Review allergy lists and dietary restrictions and ensure they are implemented.
- Respond and act on the feedback and recommendations of supervising staff, as appropriate.
- Report any allegations/concerns as per the “Duty to Report” under the *Child and Family Services Act*
- Complete offence declarations annually, no later than 15 days after the anniversary date of the last VSC or offence declaration (whichever is most recent) in accordance with the child care centre’s criminal reference check policy.
- Provide an offence declaration to the supervisor/designate as soon as possible any time they have been convicted of a Criminal Code (Canada) offence.

Glossary

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.

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

Student: Individual who is enrolled in an education program/school and is completing a placement.

Volunteer: An individual who participates in the child care program and interacts with children in care but is not paid by the licensee.

Updated August 2019

Prohibited Practices/Behavioural Guidance Policy

Royal City Cooperative Preschool believes in guiding the behaviour of children in a positive manner at a level appropriate to their actions and ages in order to promote self-discipline, ensure health and safety, respect the rights of others and maintain equipment. Research has shown that a consistent, positive, caring and supportive environment nurtures the positive development of the child including their behaviour, and helps to prevent the development of some behaviour problems and to reduce challenging behaviour (Dunlop et.al. 2006) All volunteers and employees must comply with the regulations in the Ministry of Education’s Child Care Early Years Act.

The following practices will NOT be used:

- corporal punishment of the child;
- 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;
- locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- 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;
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or · inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will. Our staff and volunteers will use their best judgement in every situation, and will intervene when necessary and allow some incidents to resolve themselves.

At Royal City Cooperative Preschool we WILL use the following practices:

- Promote positive behaviour through a consistent, positive, caring and supportive environment.
- Make our expectations clear.
- Use directive statements.
- Model desirable behaviour with the children and with other staff and volunteers.
- Ensure that our behaviour guidance is appropriate to the development level of the child.
- Encourage the children to respect the rights and belongings of others, and of the group.
- Address troublesome behaviour in an appropriate manner as soon as possible.
- Use observation to avoid potential situations as they arise.
- Take note of good behaviours as often as we do negative behaviours.
- Encourage self-regulation
- Communicate incidents with parents and caregivers taking into account the child's overall behaviour for the duration of the class. If the behaviour is repeated and all strategies have been exhausted, other inclusion support services may be requested after parental consent has been granted. (see Challenging Behaviour below)

Strategies to ensure these practices:

- Observe and listen to mitigate or diffuse possible conflicts. Verbal intervention may be used to refer to a relevant rule to allow the child to choose a different course of action.
- Know when the children in our care are having an 'off day' and help them to identify and name their feelings and discuss events of the day with them.

- Help children in our care to identify physical changes in their body, such as feeling hot, heart racing, clenching hands, when they are angry, frustrated, overwhelmed. Work on calming techniques to help children learn self-regulation skills.
- Model good behaviours and positive communication skills (being considerate with each other).
- Use positive language that is simple and understandable ('we walk inside' not 'don't run!').
- Use positive body language and tone (eye contact, soothing tones, encouraging 'inside voices').
- Personal requests and responses (reminding children of the appropriate rules spoken at eye-level, not shouted across the room).
- Give examples and options so that children learn to make wise choices.
- Acknowledge and support good decisions and behaviours by the children ("Thank you for sharing" or "I see you're working hard to make sure others are included!")
- Distraction (suggest a child come and look at something interesting other than that which is causing distress)
- Redirection ("Why don't we try....").
- Allow the children to choose a new course of action. ("Would you like to ask for the toy again?")
- Negotiate solutions with the children by suggesting a few simple rules (i.e., first child gets the toy for 2 minutes, followed by the next child for 2 minutes etc. or another toy offered in exchange)
- Regular and effective daily communication with parents/ caregivers, letting them know what happened and what was done to resolve the issue.

Each volunteer or employee is required to review this policy upon commencing duties and annually afterwards. Each volunteer or employee is required to sign the record indicating he/she has read and understands the Behaviour Guidance Policy for Royal City Cooperative Preschool. Any violation of these practices by staff or volunteer must be reported immediately to any Board of Director who, in turn must report it directly to the President of the Corporation. The President will use discretion in the prompt resolution of the violation dependent upon the severity. The President of the Board of Directors (in conjunction with the Supervisor where appropriate) may follow the 'Procedure for Monitoring Behaviour Guidance Practices' and the Disciplinary Action Procedure and complete a Disciplinary Warning Notice Form. This is a direct reference to the Policy within the Child Care Early Years Act.

Challenging Behaviour

When a child's behaviour becomes challenging, not only for herself/himself, but also for the other children in our care it becomes a concern to parents, preschool staff and all personnel involved. In an effort to deal with these types of behaviours, the following procedures will take place:

1. Incidents of behaviour difficulties will be observed and documented in the daily log as well as the methods used to intervene. Parents will be made aware of concerns verbally.
2. Staff will discuss and plan consistent strategies.
3. If, after several incidents, the staff believes their strategies are being challenged, a meeting with the child's parent or guardian, preschool staff and the President of the Board of Directors will be arranged. Permission to contact an outside agency for assistance and assessment may be sought if deemed appropriate. A "Release of Information" form should be signed at this time.
4. Written summaries of all further actions will be kept on file and a copy given to the parent.

5. The above procedure is based on the full cooperation of the parents in seeking a solution to the challenging behaviour exhibited by the child. If the parent refuses to cooperate or will not recognize the efforts of the Royal City Cooperative Preschool to seek a solution, the Board of Directors may discuss a notice of withdrawal of services.

Revised August 2019

Authorization of Drug/Medication Administration

Consent forms are required for all medications. Prescription medications must be brought to the preschool in the original container, clearly labeled by the pharmacy with the child's name, name of the medication, dosage, and any instructions for storage and administration. All other medications should come in their original packaging. The medication must not be expired or it will not be administered. The parent/guardian should complete the medication consent form provided, and lock the medication in the cupboard or refrigerator as required.

All medications shall be given by the supervisor or acting supervisor. Staff will only administer medication as per instructions on the label and with the authorization given by the parent that they must fill out on the "Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration" *Consent For The Administration of Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medication*". The supervisor will also document on the "Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration" form after administering the medication. One copy of the "Authorization" will be filed in the child's personal file in the filing cabinet. One copy of the "Authorization" will be kept with the medication and the "Authorization for Drug/Medication Administration" will also be kept in the child's personal file. All files are kept for three years.

Staff will use their judgement to advise parents if any medication is interfering with the child's ability to participate in the program.

If a child is exhibiting ill health and/or unable to cope in the program the parent will be contacted and arrangements will be made to have the child picked up.

Updated June 2019

Emergency Management Policies and Procedures

Royal City Cooperative Preschool has the following policies and procedures in place, available in full on our web page:

- Emergency Management Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- Serious Occurrence Policy

Updated September 2020