

# COOK'S SCHOOL DAY CARE INC.

learning through play, building friendships along the way



Centre- and home-based child care in Cobourg & Northumberland County

## PROGRAM STATEMENT

Cook's School Day Care Inc was established in 1985 and has built a solid reputation as an excellent early learning and child care provider for children 3 weeks to 13 years of age.

Cook's believes that:

- Children are **competent, capable and rich in potential** and we will offer every child opportunities and encouragement to pursue, share and celebrate his or her individual passions, curiosities and abilities.
- Every child deserves a safe, warm, caring and inclusive environment where respect, care and understanding are priorities.

The Minister's policy statement names **How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years** as the document to be used for the purpose of guiding programming and pedagogy in licensed child care programs and we are committed to this vision.

Every child will feel that they **belong**, that their **well-being** is a priority and that they have time and a place to become **engaged** and **express** themselves in their play.

Cook's School Day Care Inc's goals for the children, families and educators are listed below with the approaches we will use to achieve/monitor them.

### PROMOTING HEALTH, SAFETY, NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING

#### HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Our approach will be:

- Written policies and procedures, with any accompanying drills and or documentation, that address all aspects of the children's health and well-being while in our care. These policies and procedures are listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy, Cook's Policy and Procedures binder, and in our current Parent Handbook.
- Written policies and procedures that address all aspects of the children's health and well-being while using extended hour care in our home child care program. This policy and procedure is listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy, Cook's Policy and Procedures binder, and in our current Parent Handbook.
- Required proof of qualifications, training and certifications listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy.
- Annual heating inspections, weekly water flushing and scheduled water testing, and acting on any recommendations from health unit inspections. \*

\* Denotes approaches used at the centre only.

- Daily, monthly, seasonal and annual playground inspections. \*
- No smoking signs.
- Sun safety program from May 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> or any time before and or after May 1<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> if requested and supplied by the parent.
- Copies on file of immunizations for all children, educators, students and volunteers. Objections or exemptions must be completed on a ministry-approved form and retained in the applicable children's or staff's files.
- Daily health checks as the children come in each day.
- Daily written record (communication book) maintained and reviewed at the beginning of individual shifts and throughout the day regarding health and well-being.
- A list of all children with allergies and medical needs available and posted in all areas occupied by the children. When outdoors, the information is kept accessible in the attendance binder /emergency cards. In the centre cubby room, the list is posted inside the upper cupboard door with the black letter "A" by the door handle.
- Current Individual Emergency Response plans are kept in the child's file and accessible to the provider or educators (with emergency cards).
- Indicating in writing the avoidance strategies for the educators and providers to follow in response to any Individual Emergency Response Plan. Documented on the reverse side of Individual Emergency Response Plan – A.
- Family Care/Individualized Support Plans.
- Recruiting a team of responsive and nurturing educators.
- Providing a rest/quiet period with cots, sheets and blankets for every child – books and or quiet activities for those who do not sleep.
- Scheduled outdoor and active play time.
- Supporting self-regulation.

All Cook's educators understand the stages of early childhood development and positive approaches to self-regulation. Educators are alert to the latest research, resources and strategies to support children's attempts to regulate their behaviour, emotions, attention and overall **wellbeing**.

### Our approach to promoting self-regulation:

- Predictable routines.
- Consistent, responsive care-giving.
- Educators who act in a professional manner with colleagues and parents, supporting positive relationships.
- Use language to help children identify and express their feelings and emotions.
- Giving children choices about learning activities.
- Minimizing waiting times during transitions.
- Creating learning environments and giving opportunities to promote and practice self-regulation (i.e., turn taking games, group activities etc.).

## SAFETY

### Our approach will be:

- Written policies and procedures with any accompanying drills and or documentation that address all aspect of the children's safety while in our care. These policies and procedures are listed in our Implementation Policy, Policy and Procedure binder and in our Parent Handbook.
- Written policies and procedures that address all aspects of the children's safety while using extended hour care in our home child care program. This Policy and Procedure is listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy, Cook's Policy and Procedures binder, and in our current Parent Handbook.
- Annual Fire Systems Inspection including extinguishers.
- Required proof of qualifications, training and certifications listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy.
- Educators are trained in standard first aid and CPR, have current and clear police/vulnerable sector checks, and clear children's aid society checks.
- Information on all children with allergies, or other medical needs available and posted in all areas occupied by the children. When outdoors, the information is kept accessible in the attendance binder /emergency cards. In the centre cubby room, the list is posted inside the upper cupboard door with the black letter "A" by the door handle.
- Information is available that includes individual emergency response plans and or individual support plans.
- Daily written record (communication book) maintained and reviewed at the beginning of individual shifts and throughout the day regarding safety.
- Information on file of all children with custody agreements.
- Toy and Equipment Policy and current inventory for home child care. Includes condition of items and recommendations relating to replacement if needed.

## NUTRITION

### Our approach will be:

- Offering a five week rotating summer and winter menu that meets the requirements set out in "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide". \* Menus will be posted in each room and entrance indicating the current week and noting any changes or substitutions.
- Daily written record (communication book) maintained and reviewed at the beginning of individual shifts and throughout the day regarding nutrition.
- Written policies and procedures that address all aspects of the children's nutrition while using extended hour care in our home child care program. This policy and procedure is listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy, Cook's Policy and Procedures binder, and in our current Parent Handbook.
- To ensure time for the children to eat their lunch and snacks.

\* Denotes approaches used at the centre only.

- To ensure a relaxed atmosphere where educators sit with the children and encourage them to try the different foods, to make choices about their needs and to help serve and clean up during lunch and snacks.
- Offer an early morning breakfast time serving labelled items supplied from home; exception: milk is provided by the centre. Parents are informed about the time when breakfast is offered (i.e., centre - from 6 am to 7:30 am. \*
- Homo milk is served to children up to 24 months of age and 2% milk to children older than 24 months of age.
- Offer a late snack time for those children who stay past 6 pm.
- Offer water to drink at all times – jugs of water and cups available in the activity rooms. Labelled cups for the toddlers and disposable for the older children.
- Opportunities for parents to provide substitutes for food limitations/restrictions and or allergies. Providers and educators will ensure that any food or substitutions provided by the family are clearly labelled. Centre Staff will ensure that the kitchen staff is aware.

### LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Provide planned and child-initiated experiences both indoors and out that foster the children's **expression**, exploration, inquiry and where each child's learning and development will be supported.

#### **Our approach will be:**

- Posted schedule of activities for each group that reflects the flow of the day with minimal transitions. \*
- Provide quality play materials, craft supplies and equipment.
- Provide a sufficient number, variety, appropriate for developmental level, of play materials and that are available throughout the day.
- Arrange uninterrupted time for the children to play, explore and inquire both indoors and outdoors.
- Arrange space for the children to play, explore and inquire both indoors and outdoors.
- Schedule time each week for the educators to observe, document and plan, if necessary.
- Provide materials that the educators will need to observe, document and plan.
- Schedule time at team meetings to share, collaborate and reflect with each other.
- Support on-going training.
- Encourage opportunities (verbal and through documentation) to communicate with the parents and families regarding the children's interests and experiences to expand their learning.

## POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Provide a stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment where children can act on their curiosity, become **engaged** with their peers and surroundings and have a sense of **belonging**.

### **Our approach will be:**

- Environments are child orientated.
- Arrange areas that promote relationships, develop gross/fine motor skills, cognitive, emotional, communication, language and literacy.
- Arrange the environment to ensure that educators can see all the children while interacting with them.
- Keeping the environment clean, tidy and free from clutter, including storage shelves, cupboards and containers for recyclables.
- Creating environments that acknowledge values and diversity – pictures, books, celebrations etc.
- Arranging the children's art work and documentation throughout the room and at the children's level to ensure they can be enjoyed by the children, parents and educators.
- Allow time for the educators to reflect, document and collaborate on the different environments to ensure they are working. \*

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Our programs will be guided by early childhood educators, support educators and home child care providers. Educators who are responsive to children, their families and the community, and who will participate in play as co-learners, guiding, communicating and extending children's explorations. Educators who will observe, document and reflect to help find meaning in what children do and what they experience and act on what they find.

Educators that share their perspectives with parents and colleagues as a way of building meaningful relationships and as a means of supporting children's learning, development, health and well-being including the ability to self-regulate.

### **Our approach will be:**

- Non-discriminatory recruitment practices for educators and board members.
- Review annually or when applicable written policies and procedures. These policies and procedures are listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy, Policy and Procedure binder and in the Parent Handbook.
- Required proof of qualifications training and certifications listed in our Implementation & Monitoring Policy.
- Annual registration of Early Childhood Educators with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators.
- Daily written record (communication book) maintained and reviewed at the beginning of individual shifts and throughout the day regarding educators.
- Participating in continuous professional learning.

\* Denotes approaches used at the centre only.

- Supporting educators in continuous professional learning and networking. Cook's will:
  - a) Fully compensate educators for the hours that he/she participates in approved training with the option of: repayment of hours on the following pay period, banking the hours for future time off or a combination of both. Travel time and related expenses (mileage) are not included in the compensation but may be considered on an individual basis. \* Consideration will be given for home child care providers regarding compensation.
  - b) Arranging supply staff to cover educators during working hours to ensure they can attend professional training and or networking. \*
  - c) Cook's often schedules guest speakers for staff meetings and during staff meetings we allow time to share what we have learned with each other.  
Home child care providers may be invited to attend.
  - d) Lap tops and I Pads have been provided and can be used for training.
  - e) A growing resource library for each age group is available in our resource/staffroom. \*
- Scheduling opportunities for educators to share and reflect at monthly team meetings what we have learned during professional learning and through daily documentations. \*
- Providing time each week for educators to observe, document and plan, if necessary.\*
- Supply materials that the educators will need to observe, document and plan.
- Encouraging all educators to communicate (verbally and through documentation) with parents regarding the children's interests and experiences to expand learning.

### **DOCUMENTATION, CRITICAL REFLECTION AND COLLABORATION**

Educators will use documentation not only to record play, but also to record learning through play. It will help us to learn along with children what their interests are, how they think and how they learn. Documentation helps us to reflect on, extend and plan for more meaningful learning experiences. Documentation gives us the opportunity to make learning visible to other educators, to the children and to the parents. Observations are shared with parents and parents are invited to contribute to their child's learning.

#### **Our approach will be:**

- Provide a Photography Policy to give parents a choice in participating in picture documentation.
- Have our documentation tools nearby to ensure all learning opportunities are captured.
- Post documentation of all participating children throughout the classrooms; home child care on iPads.
- Document how we see the children learning and developing and then using that information to share with the parents and colleagues.
- Reflect on our documentation to plan purposeful and meaningful activities.

- Document what we feel are the children's interests and using that information to share with the parents to extend the learning.
- Reflect on what we have documented using that information to extend learning or make adjustments to our environments etc.
- Centre staff will store old documentation in individual duo tangs and make them available to the children and families to view. Home child care documentation is available for viewing by the children, families and ECE Consultant/Home Visitor on iPads.

### **OUR FAMILIES: PARENTS AS PARTNERS**

Parents and families know their children best and are able to help us in many ways to care for their children. They can offer us valuable information about their children, their cultures truly making our centre diverse. Making families feel that they belong will help the children to feel that they also belong.

#### **Our approach will be:**

- Provide families with a Parent Handbook annually to ensure they are familiar with our policies, our services including hours of operation, holidays etc.
- Give the parents opportunities to tell us about their children, during the first tour and on the application form.
- Educators will be approachable, eager for parents to share their knowledge of their children, strengths, preferences and day-to-day experiences.
- Make the families feel welcome – smiling face, greeting all parents, asking for their perspectives.
- Provide a Facebook page.
- Provide an information website.
- Provide news updates.
- Provide surveys and act on comments, suggestions etc.
- Welcome parents to volunteer on trips.
- Welcome parents/family members to join the board of directors.
- Welcome parents to attend our Annual General Meeting/Special gatherings etc.

### **COMMUNITY**

Cook's School Day Care Inc understands the importance that a community can play in the lives of the children and the families for whom we provide care. Being active in the community can promote inclusion, a sense of belonging within the community and a chance for the children to see and explore the natural environment around them. Knowing what services are available in our community can play a key role in the success of the children and the families now and in the future. Cook's is also dedicated to ensuring our community is offered an affordable, accessible, safe, reliable, well managed, high quality, inclusive early learning and child care option.

**Our approach will be:**

- New centre opening and closing hours of care - 6:00 am to 7:00 pm; home child care is offered day, afternoon, evenings, overnight and weekends.
- Buying locally and using local vendors/contractors.
- Scheduling trips in our community (summer, March break, etc.).
- Going for walks around the neighbourhood and around the town.
- Being familiar and utilizing the special services that are available to support children and families. Working closely with those services to ensure that we can and will meet the needs of the children and families in our care.

**1. Individual Support Plans:**

**Our approach will be:**

- a) Compose up to date Individual Support Plans in consultation with the parent/guardian, any health care professional, community support partner or individual who works with the child.
- b) Compose and describe any instruction of any supports or aids, or adaptations or other modifications to the physical, social and learning environment needed.
- c) Have all educators read and sign off annually or when modified any Individual Support Plans and instruction of supports.

**2. Community Support Partners, includes but is not limited to:**

- Children's Aid Society
- Cobourg Community Centre
- Cobourg Library
- Cobourg Police Services
- Five Counties Children's Centre
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
- Northumberland County Social Services
- Northumberland County Children's Services
- Northumberland Family Respite Services
- St. Peter's Anglican Church
- Salvation Army

**RESOURCES AND REFERENCES USED FOR THIS DOCUMENT**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Think Feel Act
- Excerpts from "ELECT"
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014
- Child Care Centre Licensing Manual

**KRISTEN REINSBERG**

- Tips For Supporting Your Child's Development of Self-Regulation

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