



PARENT HANDBOOK

VICTORIA PARK
CHILD
CARE
CENTRE



2022



PARENT HANDBOOK

We would like to welcome you to Victoria Park Child Care Centre. Welcome!☺ Thank you for choosing us to care for your special bundle of joy. Let us tell you a little bit about us, our staff, our program, our philosophy and our policies and procedures. Please read this handbook carefully, and feel free to discuss with the Executive Director, a staff member or Board of Directors any questions that you may have.

ABOUT OUR CENTRE

We officially opened our doors on September 22, 1986 to service the growing demand of child care in the Don Mills area. We are a community based Child Care Centre; with some of our spaces reserved for Victoria Park Collegiate Institute (V.P.C.I.) students and employees. We are a non-profit, charity corporation operated by a Board of Directors. The parents' fees cover the cost of operating the Centre. We do provide subsidized spaces.

When operating at full capacity, we provide care for 36 children; 10 infants (6 weeks to 18 months), 10 toddlers (18 to 30 months), and 16 preschoolers (2 ½ to 5 years of age). We are licensed by The Ministry of Education and hold a Purchase of Service Agreement with the City of Toronto Children's Services and abide by the Toronto Operating Criteria as well as Ministry standards for licensing.

Our staff consists of 2 Registered Early Childhood Educators in every classroom, 7 Early Childhood Assistants, and an Executive Director. We follow the emergent curriculum under the Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) framework. We offer wide variety of experiences for students from V.P.C.I. as well as ECE students from Community Colleges. It takes a community to raise a child, and we are truly happy to have such an amazing opportunity to blend three generations under one roof!

OUR PHILOSOPHY

"To develop each child through an environment that fosters a positive self-image and a love for learning, a qualified and experienced staff that supports each child's growth and development through programming that builds on their curiosity and interests, and a partnership with parents, families and community that expands on the child's experience and world."



OUR PROGRAM

At Victoria Park Child Care Centre, we view children as being competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential and we believe children are most successful at learning when curriculum experiences account for their interests, strengths, needs, and lived realities. We look to each child to help us guide their learning. We value and respect children and believe that their theories and ideas are an important source of curriculum. This is why we have adopted the **"Emergent Curriculum"** approach to learning and use the *How Does Learning Happen? Pedagogy* set out by the Ministry of Education to guide our program.

In emergent curriculum, both adults and children take initiative and make decisions. This power to impact curriculum decisions and directions means that sometimes curriculum is also negotiated between what interests' children and what adults know is necessary for children's education and development. Ideas for curriculum emerge from responding to the interests, questions, and concerns generated within a particular environment, by a particular group of children, at a particular time. Thus, emergent curriculum is never built on children's interests alone; parents and teachers also have interests worth bringing into the curriculum. The values and concerns of all the adults involved help the classroom culture evolve.

"Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)" is a framework that describes how young children learn and develop and provides a guide for curriculum in Ontario's early childhood settings, including Child Care Centre's. We began to use the ELECT framework to guide our curriculum and goals for child development coincided; we believe every child has the right to the best possible childhood. You will find a copy of the ELECT document in every classroom beside the Weekly Lesson Plan. The teachers in the room use daily observations of the children to plan activities for the following day referencing the ELECT document.

"How Does Learning Happen?" is Ontario's pedagogy that encourages our Centre to:

- a) promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children;
- b) support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;
- c) encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;
- d) foster children's exploration, play and inquiry;
- e) provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences;



- f) plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;
- g) incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care;
- h) foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children;
- i) involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff;
- j) support staff and others who interact with the children at a child care centre in relation to continuous professional learning; and
- k) Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

To achieve these goals, centre strives to create an environment with a sense of belonging that promotes well-being of the children and families in the centre through engagement and expression. It is important for the children and families of our centre to engage in the children's learning and curiosities through communication and opportunities to be heard. We believe the four foundations, **well-being, belonging, engagement, and expression**, are optimal for the children's learning and growth.

By working together as a team, parents, educators, and children, we will be able to create high quality program that focuses on the children and their growth and development.

Please note: if your child requires additional support, the Centre and with the parents' participation will access specialized services to help meet the needs of each individual child. The Centre staff will work in co-ordination with outside agencies to support the child, which may include individualized program plans, assessments, and team meetings. Please refer to the ***Inclusion Policy*** for more information.



OUR STAFF

In an Emergent Curriculum, Early Childhood Educators are not only nurturers; they are partners, facilitators, observers, and co-learners who have a deep understand of developmentally appropriate practices. The Early Childhood Educators understand individual differences and arrange their room so that children can explore at their own pace. The Early Childhood Educators provide a wide range of materials and activities in order to allow children to make their own choices. They work hard to match the curriculum to the strengths and interests demonstrated in the children.

The Early Childhood Educators understand that the early childhood experience is about learning not teaching, as a result the Educator must learn about the child from the child and family. The Early Childhood Educators watch listen and reflect on what is happening in order to reinforce the child's learning and appreciation of an experience. Lastly, the Educators facilitate the building of relationships between children, families, and communities.

All our Early Childhood Educators are registered through the College of Early Childhood Educators and participate in Professional Development Training on an on-going basis. All the staff holds a current First Aid and CPR Certificate and is recertified annually.

The staff at Victoria Park Child Care Centre comes from different backgrounds and walks of life, which only enhances our program and enriches our children's experiences. All the staff, volunteers and students have a Police Reference Check and cleared under the vulnerable screening test. We assure that our staff is qualified and experienced in working with children.

OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE POLICY

Before your child can be officially enrolled in Victoria Park Child Care Centre you must complete and provide the following documents:

- Signed Parent Agreement and Fee Schedule
- Completed Medical Information Form and a Copy of Immunization Record (or Signed Waiver)



- Signed Consent Forms including Authorization Pick-up List
- Registration Fee of \$35.00 and \$15.00 for any additional child will be subtracted from the deposit upon the child's withdrawal from the Centre.
- A refundable deposit of two-weeks (10 business days) of payment will be required on start day based on daily fee rate for full fee or subsidized families. If the family fee portion is NIL with the confirmation from the caseworker, there will be no charge for security deposit.

For the first week you are encouraged to stay with your child at the beginning of the day in order to reassure him/her and minimize fears until you and your child become more comfortable. The first day of enrolment is a half-day for you and your child, where you are encouraged to stay with your child for half a day. This gives the staff the opportunity to ask you questions and learn more about your child.

Victoria Park Child Care Centre requires two weeks written notice of withdrawal stating the child's last day, parents name and signature for the security deposit to be refunded (if applicable). A permanent space cannot be guaranteed if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child. Victoria Park Child Care Centre may terminate services if policies are not followed, or fees are not paid. **Please Refer to the *Withdrawal Policy*.**

Please keep us updated on any changes to your address, telephone number, children's health issues or emergency contact information.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

To ensure the safety of all the children in our care, children must be brought directly to the classroom in the morning and their outdoor clothing removed and shoes put on by the parent. Under NO circumstances should a child be sent into the classroom alone. Parents must ensure that a staff member is aware of the child's arrival. If you arrive before 8:00am, please go through the Toddler door if your child is in the Toddler or Preschool class.

In order to allow your child to settle into the program and to maintain the continuity and smooth operation of the planned activities, we encourage all children to arrive before 9:00 a.m. Due to ratios, we might not be able to accommodate your child if they arrive after the class has gone on the walk. You will be required to wait with your child until the class returns or find them on their neighbourhood walk. If you drop your child off at lunch, we kindly ask you to wait with your child until he/she finishes eating. If the



children are sleeping when your child arrives, please put your child to sleep on their cot as to not wake the rest of the children.

We kindly encourage all parents to have their children in the centre by 10:00 am in order for their child to get the best of the program and to maintain consistency in their daily routines. We understand parents and children do have to attend appointments and we ask you to let us know a day in advanced that your child will be coming in late due to an appointment. You can email us, leave a voice message if we do not respond or you can message us via Himama. If your child has not arrived by 10 am, we will be contacting you to ask if you are on your way to the Centre. If you arrive during mealtimes, you will be asked to stay until your child is settled and has finished their meal.

Children must be picked up by the scheduled closing time of 6:00 p.m. (including designated earlier closing times due to trips, special holiday hours or relocation) or a late fee charge will of a \$1.00 a minute for the first time and then a dollar increase per occurrence of a maximum of \$5.00 a minute will apply. The verbal reminder will be given at the very first time of the occurrence. If you are unable to contact the Centre by 7:00pm, Police and Children's Aid Society will be contacted.

If anyone other than the person listed on the *Authorization for Pick-Up* list in the Registration Package will be picking up your child, please give written notice or call the centre. We will only release your child to persons on your *Authorized Pick-Up* list and with proper photo identification (ID).

In the event of custodial disputes, we must have legal documentation regarding child custody arrangements. The staff must be provided with a copy of any court orders in place which will be kept in the child's file. If parents of a registered child are living separately and custody has not been legally determined, the staff will abide by the information given on the child's registration form as completed by the enrolling parent. We encourage both parents to sign a written agreement confirming details regarding authorization for pick-up and access to information surrounding the child's care while attending the daycare.

At the end of the day, children should be allowed time to finish their activity before getting ready to go home. If you are unable to arrive at the usual pick-up time, please let the Centre know so that the correct staff-child ratios may be arranged. The centre assumes no responsibility for children once they are picked up by a person authorized by the parent (i.e., relative, an emergency contact, child care provider, etc.). It is the Centre's policy not to



release children to siblings or others under the age of 12 years even with parental permission.

Children are signed in and out by staff members upon their arrival and departure. We ask that if your child is not going to attend care as per usual that you inform the Centre by 10am and the reason for the absence. This will help us plan for meals, and activities for the day. And if it is a communicable illness, we are required to record this in case of other cases breaking out. If no one answers the phone, please leave a brief message.

Please help us in keeping our environment clean and safe by removing your shoes at the entrance of each classroom. We will have shoe coverages available at each entrance of the classrooms if you wish to put them over your shoes instead of removing your shoes.

HiMama

The Centre provides electronic daily reports to all families about the children's day. We use HiMama which is the ultimate all-in-one childcare app. We ask you to provide your email address of yours in order to create your child/ren's profile. Through the app, the staff would be uploading details about your child/ren's day such as sleep time, diaper changes (if applicable), meal entries, one picture of the day, any message that they would like to pass you such as your child/ren's needs or notes etc. The final report would be sent to you at the end of day. General messages and announcements are also shared with the families through HiMama by the Executive Director.

The families are welcome to use HiMama to send a message to communicate with your child/ren's classroom teachers. The staff members will do their best to respond based on their availability of the day.

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE

All children display undesirable behavior at some time. The ability to manage young children's behavior in a positive manner is often challenging and complex; however, the effective guidance of young children requires a patient and nurturing caregiver who understands the tasks of children at various ages, is aware that young children are naturally curious, active and impulsive, and recognizes that the main goals of positive management are to assist children to develop responsibility, to learn and develop skills to control themselves, and to take responsibility for their own behavior. *As*



stated in the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, the following will not be permitted in guiding a child's behaviour:

- a) corporal punishment of a child;
- b) deliberate harsh or degrading measures on a child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect;
- c) depriving of a child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding;
- d) locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child; or
- e) Physical restraint of children, including but not limited to confining to high chair, car set.
- f) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Please refer to our *Behaviour Guidance Policy* for more information.

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT

In accordance with the Child and Family Services Act, it is the responsibility of every person in Ontario, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children, to immediately report to Children's Aid Society if they suspect that child abuse has occurred or if a child is at risk of abuse. This includes any operator or employee working with children. An individual's responsibility to report cannot be delegated to anyone else. **Please refer to our *Child Abuse Policy* for more information.** If you need to report to a Children's Aid Society, the numbers are posted below.

Children's Aid Society
(416) 924-4646

Catholic Children's Aid Society
(416) 395-1500

Jewish Family and Child Services
(416) 638-7800.

Native Child and Family Services
(416) 969-8510

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

Children should come dressed in comfortable clothing that can get dirty, since some activities we do on a daily basis are messy. A spare change of clothes is required for all children in case of soiling of clothes. Children under the age of 3, and those who are potty-training require at least two changes of clothing (including socks). We want to keep your children happy and comfortable.



A separate set of indoor shoes is required at the Centre for each child at all times. Feet are required to remain covered by Public Health at ALL times when indoors. These "indoor shoes" can be simply a pair of cros from the dollar store, or even a separate set of sneakers if you wish. Indoor shoes also protect your child's feet in the event of a fire drill in the winter months/rainy days. We strongly encourage families to provide Velcro shoes in order to avoid possible accidents in case of tripping over laces.

Outdoor play is an important part of our program and under the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), we are required to have the children play outdoors for at least 2 hours per day, thus clothing for all weather conditions should be at the centre, such as winter/sun hats, coats, snow/splash pants, winter/rubber boots, 2 pairs of waterproof mittens, neck warmer, scarves etc.

In every classroom, there are cubbies for every child in the program that are labelled with their name. We ask that you provide your child with extra set of clothing in case they spoil them. Wet or soiled laundry will be placed in a plastic bag and hung on your child's cubby hook to get laundered. If your child needs more clothes, the teachers will attach a note to your child's cubby specifying what is needed by when. We ask that home toys and toys that resemble weapons are kept home to prevent them from getting broken or lost. The staff or the Centre will not be responsible for ensuring that toys are not lost or damaged. We encourage families to take the home toys with them after dropping off your child to avoid incidents unless it is requested by the classroom teacher for Show and Tell activity purposes.

For more information, please refer to the Welcome Package from your child's class.

Please discuss with the Executive Directors at the time of admission if your child is unable to participate in all facets of the program.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The Centre is open year-round and operates Monday to Friday, 7:15 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The centre will be closed during the following statutory holidays:

New Year's Day	Easter Monday	Civic Holiday	Christmas Eve (or alternate)
Family Day	Victoria Day	Labour Day	Christmas Day
Good Friday	Canada Day	Thanksgiving	Boxing Day



We follow the Toronto District School Board in closing our Centre due to severe winter storm warnings. **When TDSB is deemed unsafe to open due to inclement weather, our Centre will be also closed.** It will be the parent's responsibility to pick up their child from our Centre or find alternate care if the Centre is closed on such rare occasions.

When school buses are canceled, the Centre is still open. When the Toronto District School Board closes **all schools** then the centre is closed also.

FEES

Our fees for the following rooms are:

Infant	\$1,550.00
Toddler	\$1,310.00
Preschool	\$1,026.00

For more information regarding our fee, please refer to the *Fee Schedule* in the registration package.

For late fees, please refer to the Arrival and Departure Procedures.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE OR AT THE SOUND OF THE BELL:

- Each staff member will take the group of children that he/she is responsible for and leave the building by the south east exit doors (if obstructed use the North doors) in a calm and orderly manner.
*All Infants are placed in a designated emergency crib and two staff members push the crib to the designated exits.
- Each staff member and his/her group of children will remain outside until the arrival of the Executive Director. The Executive Director will be responsible for making sure all children are accounted for and will give the all-clear to return inside. **DO NOT MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE DAY CARE.**
- If it is a necessary to vacate the school for an extended period of time, the staff and children will proceed to the emergency shelter location.

Ranchdale Public School	60 Ranchdale Crescent, North York, ON M3A 2M3	(416) 395-2800 Principal: Kathy Frame-Adshead
Ranchdale Rompers Day Care	60 Ranchdale Crescent, North York, ON M3A 2M3	(416) 441-1233 Director: Donna Ciccarelli

If you are picking up your child during a Fire Drill or from the Evacuation site, please see your child's teacher to ensure they are aware of your child's departure. This is important to assure that every child is accounted for.

FIELD TRIPS AND OUTINGS

Field trips and walks are a regular and carefully supervised part of our program. At times, off-site activities such as walks in the neighbourhood are not always planned ahead of time but occur to accommodate the interests and needs of the children. Children in our programs often go on walks and take advantage of what the surrounding community has to offer (e.g., parks, stores etc.). These excursions are considered part of the daily program and will not include motor transportation. A consent form, in the registration package, acknowledges parental permission for a child to leave the premises for neighbourhood walks and visits to local parks.

Parents will be notified of any field trips through the monthly calendars, permission forms and postings. Majority of the field trips take place during the months of June, July and August. Parents are welcome to come along with their child on these outings. If parents do not wish for their child to participate in field trips; it is the parent's responsibilities to find alternate child care for the specified length of time allotted for the field trip.

Field Trips are by foot or bus (school bus or TTC) only. No private vehicles, other than the case of a parent/guardian transporting his/her own child, will be used for transportation of any child in any program provided by the Centre. During all trips and walks, the individual ratios of each program will be maintained for all children.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

To maintain a good standard of health, a Daily Health Check is completed upon each child's arrival at the centre. The Centre follows Public Health and Child Care and Early Years Act guidelines on illness and exclusion policies. Children showing signs of a communicable disease such as pink eye,



vomiting, 2 or more bouts of diarrhea, fever, undiagnosed rash/skin disease, must be kept at home until diagnosed by a physician. Please notify the centre if your child has been exposed to any communicable disease whether or not they are showing any symptoms. A sign will be posted to report any communicable disease to the parents.

Should a child become ill during the day, he/she will be isolated from the other children and the parent contacted to pick up the child immediately. It is the parent's responsibility to pick up their child or to make arrangements for them to be picked up. **Please refer to our *Health Policy* for more information.**

A full documented medical form and emergency consent form must be presented on or before the first day of enrolment. All children must be up to date with their required immunizations or have a signed exemption form signed by the parent and submitted prior to starting. It is the parent's responsibility to provide the Centre with up-to-date medical information.

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can be caused by foods, insect stings, medications, latex or other substances. Education and awareness is the key to keeping children with potentially life-threatening allergies safe. Our Centre's anaphylaxis plan is designed to ensure that children at risk are identified, strategies are in place to minimize the potential for accidental exposure and staff is trained to respond in an emergency situation. Please let the Executive Director know if your child has an anaphylactic allergy as we will need to fill out an Individualized plan and Emergency Procedures for a child with an *Anaphylactic Allergy and Emergency Action Plan Agreement*. For more information please refer to our *Anaphylactic Policy*.

Victoria Park Child Care Centre is a **nut-free environment**. Food and drinks from outside are not permitted. If the family wishes to bring birthday treats or cake/cupcakes, the **Peanut-Free** sign must be clearly visible on the package. Prior to bringing any treats or cake/cupcakes, it must be communicated by the family with the Executive Director in

advanced. The treats will not be accepted if the Peanut-free sign is not visible. Homemade treats (food, drinks etc.) are not permitted in the Centre. Food without a clearly visible Peanut-Free sign will not be served to the children.

Accidents and young children seem to go together. Children often fall and always seem to have bumps and scrapes. If your child gets hurt at the centre an *Accident Report* will be completed and available for you to sign at the end of the day in acknowledgment of the accident. The report will then be placed in your child's file and a copy provided to you.

For the safety of all children and staff in our program, a monthly fire drill is conducted as part of our program. This provides children with practice exiting the building in a calm and orderly manner. In the event of a building evacuation, Victoria Park Child Care Centre will evacuate to our emergency shelter as stated in the posted *Fire Drill Procedures*.

In case of emergency, every effort will be made to contact the parents or the emergency contact. Sometimes this is not possible, and immediate treatment is necessary. If your child is hurt or becomes seriously ill while in care at Victoria Park Child Care Centre, he/she may be treated at the emergency room of the hospital as required.

MEDICATION

Medication will only be administered once the parent or guardian has completed a *Medication Authorization Form*. These forms must be filled out with specific instructions as to the time and dosage given to the child. Medication will **only** be given to a child if the medication is in the original container as supplied by a pharmacist and the package is clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage of the medication, the date of purchase and expiration, if applicable the instruction for storage and administration. Medication **will not** be given to the child if it has another name on the package, the medication is expired or the above is conditions are not met.

We cannot administer medication under instructions such as "if you feel it is necessary". **Exception:** Medications to ease asthma and /or allergic reactions will be administered, as necessary, once the parent or guardian has outlined clearly the conditions required to make the medicine necessary and has completed a *Medication Authorization Form*. The *Individualized Plan for a Child with Medical Needs* must be completed if your child who has one or more acute or chronic medical conditions (Diabetes, Seizure, Asthma or other) such that he or she requires additional supports, accommodation, or assistance.



If a low-grade fever persists for longer than 24 hours, your child will need to stay at home until they are fever free (without the use of fever



reducing medications; example: Advil, Tylenol, Tempra etcetera) or a note from your doctor is provided. At no time can the children stay in the program with a fever of 102.0 degrees Fahrenheit (38.8 degrees Celsius) or over. If a child develops a fever during the day, the parent will be notified as soon as possible. The child will be isolated from the rest of the children and the parent will be asked to pick up their child immediately.

Medications will be stored in a container in the refrigerator or designated cupboard in the kitchen, as required. All medications are kept in locked containers. It is the parent's responsibility to take the medication home at night. Epi-pens and puffers will be kept close at hand, as required by the child's condition. It is extremely helpful to the staff if medications are placed in a Ziploc bag with a spoon and given by the family to a staff member with the child's name labeled on the Ziploc bag to put into a locked medication box in the refrigerator or cupboard.

PLEASE NOTE: Children requiring medications for an illness of a serious nature, such as asthma or an anaphylactic allergy will not be allowed to attend daycare unless they have the appropriate medication (i.e., Epi-Pen, Puffer) with them.

NAP TIME

The Child Care and Early Years Act requires that each child eighteen months of age and up to and including five years of age in attendance for six hours or more in a day shall have a rest period of not more than two hours in length following the mid-day meal. A child who is unable to sleep during the rest period is not kept in bed for longer than 0 and is to be permitted to engage in quiet activities (rest period is to be agreed upon by caregiver and parent).

The children in the Toddler and Preschool room have their rest period from 12:00pm to 2:00pm every day. The children in the infant program follow their individual schedule for naps and feedings. For your child's comfort we ask that you bring a blanket for nap time. Children under 12 months will not be permitted to have any extra items in the crib such as blankets or bumper pads. Light weight sleep sacs are permitted.

The small blanket that you provide for your child will be sent home once a week for washing. We provide cribs/cots and fitted sheets for each child which will be cleaned every week or more often if required.



Infant Crib Policy

Proper sleep is an important part of every infant's growth and development. VPCCC has a crib designated for each infant enrolled at the Centre. Infants' sleep times vary for each child and VPCCC follows your child's individual sleep schedule. Upon enrollment and other appropriate times, such as at transitions between programs or child's needs, parents will be consulted on their child's sleeping arrangements. Children under the age of 12 months will be placed on their back in the crib. A VPCCC staff member will be in the sleep room supervising the children when there are 3 or more children in their cribs. When there are less than 3 infants sleeping, a baby monitor will be used. The electronic monitoring device will be checked daily.

- Infants will be checked on by a VPCCC member every 15 minutes while they are in their cribs. Staff will assess the child's breathing, temperature, safety, and overall well-being. Staff will then initial time of check on a chart in the sleep room.
- Parents are welcome to bring in a light blanket (12 months and older) or sleep sack for their child to use. If none is provided, the centre will provide a blanket for them.
- Other than a firm mattress and a fitted sheet, there should not be any extra items such as pillows, duvets, blankets and bumper pads in the crib to reduce the risk of suffocation.
- Infants are safest when placed to sleep in fitted one piece sleepwear that is comfortable at room temperature to reduce the risk of overheating and minimize the use of blankets (0-12 months of age).
- Staff will wash the crib sheets once a week or more often if needed.
- Parents will wash and return their child's own blanket from home once a week, or more often if needed.
- When not in use, blankets will be hung over the crib headboard as to not block air flow in the room.
- No sleep toys, stuffed animals or pillows are allowed in the cribs.
- Soothers may be used in the crib but cannot be attached to any item or clip.
- Infants may not be permitted to sleep with anything around their neck, i.e. bibs, necklaces.
- If a child has a mild illness, the staff will position themselves beside that child's crib. If there are fewer than 3 children in the sleep room, that child will sleep on a cot in the playroom.

NUTRITION

Under no circumstances will young children be allowed to walk around or play with bottles in their mouths. If your child requires a bottle at nap, it will be given to him or her before they get into bed. Under no circumstances will children be allowed to go to sleep with bottles in their cribs/cots. This is also to ensure safety (prevent choking) and to prevent dental problems.

At all mealtimes staff sit with children and model positive appropriate social interaction and promote healthy eating habits. It is the parent's responsibility to notify staff regarding any dietary or cultural considerations for their individual children so staff can ensure that nutritional requirements are fully met.

The children are provided with a hot, nutritious lunch and two snacks as well as a third late afternoon light snack. Parents are reminded that the morning snack is not meant as a replacement for breakfast. Please ensure that your child has had breakfast before his/her arrival at the centre.

The menu rotates on a four-week cycle and is posted in the centre. Our lunch and snacks are catered by **Wholesome Kids Catering** who ensure that all the meals meet the daily nutritional requirements set out by the Child Care and Early Years Act and Canada's Food Guide for Healthy Eating. Please let the Executive Director know of any special dietary and feeding restrictions so proper arrangements can be made with the caterers. The Centre provides milk and fresh water readily available to children. For more information please visit their website, <https://wholesomekids.ca/>.

For infants, a signed written feeding schedule including the type of food, time and quantities must be provided for the teachers to follow.

The schedule should be reviewed at least monthly with the caregiver in case of any changes. Infant cereal and jar food will be provided by the Centre until the child is one or eating table food. Parents are responsible for bringing in formula and bottles labeled with your child's name. For infants on table food, parents are required to sign the menus provided by the caterer. All infants are fed in accordance with written instructions from a parent of the child. **For more information, please refer to the Infant Room Welcome Package.**



FOOD PREPARATION POLICY

Food for meals and snacks will be provided by our catering service "Wholesome Kids Catering". No food prepared in staff member's homes or at the Centre's kitchen can be served to the children while they are in the care of Victoria Park Child Care Centre. Activities in the day care that involve the children making food is allowed as long as consent was provided through parent review of the meal plan. Food prepared by staff as a gift for the children, can be placed in the cubby and then parents can decide if and when it is fed to their child.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

It is our goal as a Centre to maintain an "OPEN DOOR" policy. We feel it is important to have open communication with the parents and families. Parents are always welcome at the Centre at any time during the day to visit with their child. We feel that this is a very positive experience, as long as your child can deal with the separation once they return to the program or the parent leaves.

If any of the following is observed, we will meet with the parent and request a restricted visitation:

- Child cries or is distraught, having a hard time settling back.
- Child's play is interrupted.
- Child's individual schedule is interrupted i.e. sleep, lunch, diaper changes, etc.
- Other children become upset or distraught.

If you wish occasionally to take your child out of the Centre for a short time, please let your child's teacher know as they will be signed out of roster and signed in upon return. Only parents will be permitted to visit their child during the day.

Please Note: The Centre is not liable for any injury that may occur out of the Centre and program.

We ask that you advise us of any changes or events at home that may affect your child's behavior. Our staffs are committed to providing an environment which fosters co-operation between the home and Centre. It is very important that both the parents and the teachers work together to help your child reach their full potential.



Daily contact with parents is encouraged at drop off and pick up times. The children are involved in many new and exciting activities throughout their day. Talking with your child about their day's activities will enrich both their experiences and your relationship. We encourage parents to spend time in the centre during drop-off and pick-up times, this allows for informal information sharing for both parents and teachers. If you need longer amount of time to discuss your child's progress with your child's teacher, meetings will be scheduled upon request.

Parents with special talents are welcome to participate and contribute to the programs.

Weekly Program Plans are all posted in each program on the Parent Information Board located in each room.

Field trips – We encourage all parents to accompany us on our field trip outings.

Family Events –we plan an annual special family event. –Family Potluck taking place in August. We may also have other events happening and will keep you posted on these.

Fundraising- parents are asked to assist the centre in the fundraising throughout the year. Fundraising helps us in keeping our childcare fees down by assisting us in purchasing numerous program supplies, such as new toys, gross motor equipment, creative supplies, and sunscreen.

Board of Directors – the centre is run by a Board of Directors which meets every month, except July and August. You are encouraged to attend these meetings as members and are welcome to join the Board as a Director. For more information, please talk to the Executive Director who will put you in contact with the Board President.

PARKING

Victoria Park Collegiate Institute offers two parking lots; one located at exit 4 and the other at exit 11. Exit 11 doors are locked after 9:00am during September to June to ensure safety and minimize disturbance to ongoing classes. You may use exit 4 doors or the main entrance to enter the school.

SERIOUS OCCURENCE

If a serious accident occurs that results in the need for medical attention, the centre will contact you and arrangements will be made for you to pick up



your child or meet the staff at the emergency facility. If you cannot be reached, we will contact your emergency contact.

The centre has a serious occurrence policy that states we are required to post information about serious occurrences that happen at the centre. To support increased transparency and access to information, a "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" will be posted at the centre on the *Parent Information Board*. For more information please refer to our *Serious Occurrence Policy* attached to the *Parent Handbook*.

STROLLERS

The Centre does not have storage space for strollers. Parents may leave their stroller outside their child's classroom. The centre is not responsible for loss or damage to strollers, car seats or items attached to strollers.

STUDENT PLACEMENT AND VOLUNTEERS

Victoria Park Child Care Centre works in cooperation with high schools, community colleges and universities in the area, the child care centre is frequently used as a source of practical experience for students in early childhood education. These students and volunteers enhance the staffing and permit individualized care and special activities to be implemented.

At times, the student will be observing a child and recording his/her actions and reactions. The names of the children do not appear anywhere. The purpose is to help the student learn the various observation techniques that they will use when they are in the field. The students and volunteers are supervised at all times and are never to be left alone with a child at any time. A short description about the volunteer or student will be posted in the classroom where they are volunteering or doing their field placement. **Please refer to our Volunteer and Student Supervision Policy for more information.**

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is a co-operative effort between child, parent and staff. When a child is ready for training, we encourage parents to discuss that with their child's teachers. To begin a collaborative process in supporting your child's potty training success.

It is important that the child receives positive reinforcement when deserved and acceptance when an accident occurs. This process takes time. It is also



usual that the child will regress at some time temporarily. We feel that it is important that the toilet training period be a happy one for both the child and the parent.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak with your child's teacher or the Executive Director.

If you feel your concern has not been addressed, please put in writing in a sealed envelope and the Executive Director will take it to the Board of Directors. You can also email the Board of Directors at vpccboardofdirectors@yahoo.ca.

A meeting will be set up with a Board Representative and all people concerned. The Board Representative may choose to take concerns to the full Board of Directors for direction and will report back to the parent with the outcome.

It is our belief that a close cooperation between parents and staff is essential in order to provide the necessary support and care to meet your child's needs while ensuring that they reach their full potential.

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Victoria Child Care Centre recognizes that the involvement of parents in their child's education partnerships is important for children's development and learning. We also recognize that there may be times of disagreement and issues of concern that will need to be resolved. This policy provides a transparent process for parents/guardians and Victoria Child Care Centre staff to use when a concern/issue is brought forward. Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Executive Director or designate and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues or 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. Persons who become aware of such concerns are also



responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business day(s) depending on the nature of situation. 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

Victoria Park Child Care 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 and/or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Executive Director.

We look forward to being a part of your child's development!