



2023/2024 Handbook

Avon Cooperative Nursery School Inc.

Box 21008 Stratford, Ontario, N5A 7V4 Avondale
United Church, 194 Avondale Ave. (Huntingdon Ave, entrance)
519-271-6400

www.avoncoop.com

Updated January 2024

WELCOME TO AVON CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL

Avon Co-op is a place where we expect to see children playing busily, safely and happily. In their play, they learn to develop motor skills, knowledge and patterns of social behaviour that fall within the limits of their capacity. Each child is unique and such uniqueness should be cherished.

MISSION STATEMENT

Supporting families and their children as they learn through play; fostering each child's individual social, emotional, and cognitive development as they learn to live in the world around them.

PROGRAM STATEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

At Avon Co-operative Nursery School, we follow How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years; in order to be consistent with the Minister's policy statement on programming and pedagogy, which reflects children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. This Program Statement is reviewed and revised annually to reflect our current goals from a programming perspective. As our staff continues to learn, we continue to improve, therefore our program continues to evolve and improve as well.

The Foundations of How Does Learning Happen?

Belonging: Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.

Well-Being: Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.

Engagement: Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.

Expression: Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

It is our aim at Avon Co-op to provide a program that encompasses these goals. The following section outlines our goals and the approaches used to implement and achieve them.

Goal #1: To develop a strong sense of belonging in the children, families and educators who are involved with our school.

This goal encompasses: CCEYA Section 46(3)(b) Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff; (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; and (i) involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and staff.

Approaches to Achieve Goal #1: Avon Co-op lays the foundation of and for a positive learning environment for the children who attend our program. By being apart of our nursery school, a sense of belonging will grow in children as they develop a secure relationship with their own teacher, the other teachers within the school, and all of our educators and staff. Children develop a sense of belonging by interacting with their peers in a positive manner through self-directed play and engaging activities. This is measurable and noticeable when observing the interactions between the children and their families and our staff. This sense of belonging develops and strengthens over the course of the family's time at our school.

Furthermore, Avon Co-op values being a visible part of our community. This creates a dynamic program that benefits the children within our school. It allows them to experience new and different things while creating a sense of belonging in the community. We strive to host programming from the community such as yoga, dance, story times, and more. The programming at Avon Co-operative Nursery School also includes opportunities for the children to visit places within the community such as a local farm, and outdoor Conservation education facility, and more; thus providing the children with enriching experiences. The community involvement piece of our programming is truly valued and each school year we try to expand upon it and reach out to other members of the community to enrich our programming with their presence. Community members such as veterinarians, librarians elderly neighbours/friends and community helpers/service providers coming into our program to interact with the children allows for the children to experience the world around them while in the familiar setting of their school which allows for comfort and familiarity. Providing these experiences has value beyond the toddler and preschool years. The experiences that the nursery school child is engaged in directly responds to the idea that children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. Through making observations of the children in the various community-based elements of our program, the educators can document the child's sense of self-confidence increasing.

We offer engaging activities both indoors and outdoors that allow for many different types of play including active, quiet, co-operative, and parallel play. Our programs are strengthened by observing children and their interests and planning for activities that support and follow this direction. Observations are made and documented by the RECE staff and thus, parents are able to see the progression and development of the children throughout the school year.

Goal #2: To develop a strong sense of well-being for the children, families, and educators involved in our school.

This goal encompasses: Section CCEYA 46(3) (a) promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children and (j)

support staff... or others who interact with the children at a child care centre... in relation to continuous professional learning.

Approaches to Achieve Goal #2: A child's developing sense of well-being and self is encouraged while learning about healthy day to day habits such as hand washing and healthy eating during daily routines. A family style snack (while altered due to COVID-19) is an element of our program that allows for learning opportunities regarding nutrition. Various snack items spark many discussions and learning opportunities. Through the free choice play time with the ability for all children to choose between activities such as gross motor, fine motor and various other unstructured and structured activities, the children are able to develop their ability to self-direct their own learning which directly develops children's sense of well-being. A child's sense of well-being is also developed while spending time at Avon Co-op through the knowledge they are cared for and valued for who they are. They will feel secure in the relationships they develop with their peers and teachers, and this will have a positive impact on their sense of well-being. These relationships and learning opportunities lead to an increase in awareness about how people live, cooperate, and interact successfully. Through developing a strong sense of well-being, children's ability to self-regulate develops. Self-regulation skills are encouraged and enhanced by the use of programs such as Second Step and programming that allows for much free choice offered to the children as well as during snack time that is offered daily where children are able to participate, interact and have conversations with their peers and their teachers.

Our municipality allows for visits from a Resource Teacher through the City of Stratford. This is a benefit to not only the children who may have an Individual Service Plan, but also to our program teachers as they can utilize the skills of the Resource Teacher to augment their programming to best suit the needs of all the children, thus creating an inclusive environment.

Avon Co-op's teachers are encouraged to participate in professional development whenever possible. Generally, our educators are willing to participate in various sessions throughout the school year. This gives them the ability to enrich the programming further and supports the College of Early Childhood Educator's mandate for Continuous Professional Learning.

Goal #3: To develop a pattern whereby the children, families, and educators who are involved in our school are actively engaged and relationships are built.

This goal encompasses: CCEYA Section 46(3) (d) foster the 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; and (k) document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) – (j).

Approaches to Achieve Goal #3: By interacting with the other children in the program, the teachers and the program staff, the children at Avon Co-op will learn about their world and how they fit into it. Our program offers interesting, engaging, and open-ended activities, provocations, and child-directed experiences that are meant to allow children to learn using all of their senses and experience what is around them physically and cognitively. This will encourage the children to become invested and fully engaged in their own interests. Thus, allowing the children to take control of their own learning and consequently setting the stage for successful educational experiences in the future. Our educators are keen observers and can understand children's development in a meaningful way. Through the documentation of the children's development and the display of such throughout the school and by sharing this with families through both email and through documentation books, the families become actively engaged and our relationship with them is solidified and strengthened. Through sharing informative articles, having speakers when possible, and communicating items of interest to parents through various means, parents can gain knowledge and increased confidence in their role as parents and in turn the relationship between home and school is strengthened as we work together. Our school has an "open door policy" whereby parents are welcome to visit our program to observe and interact whenever they are so inclined.

Goal #4: To ensure that children, families, and educators involved with our school are able to engage in effective and meaningful communication and methods of expression.

This goal encompasses: CCEYA Section 46(3) (c) encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate; and (h) foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

Approaches to Achieve Goal #4: At Avon Co-op we engage in effective and engaging communication and interactions with our children and their families each day; thus, creating an extension of the home environment where comfort and positive experiences are of utmost importance. By being able to take charge of their own experiences, children who attend Avon Co-op will benefit as they become active learners who are able to express themselves and communicate in an effective way. We always talk with each family, each day either at arrival or dismissal or at both times. Through modelling ways of communicating and problem solving skills, children's ability to communicate is strengthened. We can see effective communication and its benefits each day when interacting with the children and their families. Through communication of learning through documentation and sharing this learning with families and communicating effectively in various manners (for example: Monday reminder emails, the white board, Facebook, etc) the home-school relationship is strengthened through strong communication.

Final thoughts on the measurable outcomes of our goals: Our program focuses on our core values at Avon Co-operative Nursery School. We believe that children are important. We feel that children need the opportunity to discover how to interact with others

in a safe and nurturing atmosphere as they develop their self-worth, confidence, and communication skills. Expressing their thoughts, feelings and acceptance of others is encouraged through our programming. Those with different abilities and capabilities are welcomed, accepted, and valued equally. The documentation of each child's progression with regard to each goal allows for measurement of the achievement of these goals and by communicating and listening effectively and purposefully with families and fellow educators.

We appreciate and include many different aspects within our program to create a well-rounded, interesting and exciting experience for the children with whom we are privileged to spend our mornings.

Art for the purpose of expression is our focus for the 2023/24 School Year.

OUR CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL PROGRAM

Our co-operative has a dual purpose: to promote greater understanding by parents in matters related to early childhood education, and to provide an excellent first school experience for the children.

This is our purpose as well as our goal at Avon Co-op. In order to be successful we all must work together. Our handbook has been compiled to assist you in becoming familiar with the policies and guidelines by which the school functions, as well as, to acquaint you with the school philosophy and our program and all the elements of it. Our handbook will also give you some helpful hints on your role as an engaged parent. We encourage you to read it and refer to it throughout the school year.

A set of the by-laws by which our school is governed are available at the school. We hope that the handbook will help you to be more knowledgeable regarding the organization and day-to-day functioning of Avon Co-operative Nursery School.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

The program activities follow the interests of the children. All activities (i.e. Art experiences, Small Group time, gym equipment) change daily but remain consistent with the interests of the children. The program becomes very flexible according to weather, field trips, special events, and holidays. Through this program the child will grow socially, physically, emotionally and intellectually towards becoming an independent, confident and caring person.

To ensure a positive ongoing program, parents must fulfill their obligations as part of their Co-op membership. This includes: fundraising, and committee work. The parents help to shape and make the Nursery School what it is. It is your child's school!! As long as parents, children and teachers work/learn together, the program will be a positive experience and new ideas will blossom!

STAFF

Janaya Krell, RECE, Director avoncoopdirector@gmail.com

Sarah Jariott, Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper avoncoopnursery@gmail.com

Melissa Mikel, RECE Preschool Teacher

Melissa Wright, RECE Preschool Teacher

Tracy Richardson, RECE Preschool Teacher

Caroline Gaw, RECE Preschool Teacher

Heather Dittrick, RECE Toddler Teacher

Yerlin Vargus, RECE Toddler Program Assistant

Dawn Bender, DSW Program Assistant

Liz Million, Program Assistant

Gill Klassen, Program Assistant

Nubia Rumaldo, Program Assistant

Alison Straus, Program Assistant

AVON CO-OP BOARD OF DIRECTORS - CONTACT INFORMATION

PRESIDENT – avoncooppres@gmail.com

VICE PRESIDENT – avoncoopvp@gmail.com

TREASURER – avoncooptreasurer@gmail.com

REGISTRAR – avoncoopregistrar@gmail.com

SECRETARY – avoncoopsecretary@gmail.com

FUNDRAISING CHAIR - avoncoopfundraising1@gmail.com

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CHAIR – avoncoopce@gmail.com

PARENT TEACHER LIAISON – avoncoopliaison@gmail.com

MEETINGS

The success of our co-op can be measured, to a large extent, by the conscientious support of all families. There are two general meetings and a committee meeting per year at which important school business is conducted. This year's meeting dates and times will be announced as we are able to determine the format in which they will be conducted (in person or virtually). The dates and meeting details (either location or virtual format) will be shared well in advance.

A \$25 registration fee refund is available to those families attending 2 of the 3 yearly meetings; therefore, attendance will be taken at these meetings to determine eligibility.

The Board of Directors Meetings meet each month. If you are interested in attending, please speak with Kailyn (avoncooppres@gmail.com) for specific dates.

ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL

To register at Avon Co-operative Nursery School, all families must pay a \$50 Registration Fee (\$25 base fee and \$25 non-base fee) per child. This fee secures their registration and allows the family to be a Member of our Co-operative. This Registration Fee is non-refundable. Furthermore, all registered families are required to pay monthly tuition fees (see below), fundraise \$150 (or \$200 for multi-child families) (non-base fee) and participate in their assigned committee work. All children registered to this school must have all medical files fully completed before admission and have complete and up-to-date immunization records. For details on how to register, see the Waiting List Policy below.

Special needs and/or past therapy must be fully disclosed upon application to the school. This helps us to meet the needs of the child as well as the needs of the other children in the program.

At the end of June, all children are discharged from the school. If a family chooses to withdraw their child before the end of June, notice in writing must be received by the Registrar, the Supervisor or Administrator 30 days prior to the first day of the month of withdrawal. Please use the withdrawal form found on Avon Co-Op's website or at the end of this handbook, and return to the school, or by email to the Registrar.

Members are expected to be accountable and participate in 2 ways:

1. **Fundraising:** During the course of the year, members are expected to raise a minimum of \$150 in profits per student or \$200 per family for those with more than one child in the school. This works out to \$15.00/month (or \$20.00 per family for multiple student families). *Please Note: Fundraising Fees are paid upfront by PAP or Cheque on July. 1, 2023. As you raise money by participating in the fundraising campaigns, you will earn back your fundraising fee to a total of \$150 (\$200 for multiple child families) (non-base fee) which will be paid out after all fundraising campaigns for the year have been completed. Should you withdraw from the program before the completion of the school year, you shall only be eligible to receive a refund for the amount that you have fundraised at the date of withdrawal. The remaining funds shall be retained by Avon Co-operative Nursery School. An example of how profits are calculated: \$100 cheese order with a profit margin of 30% means your profit is \$30. *Any/all fundraising amounts over the \$150/\$200 benefits the school directly, and is therefore greatly appreciated.
2. **Committee work:** All members are designated to one committee per family enrolled. If you are unable to fulfill your minimum hourly committee commitment, and fail to make up time during the course of the school year, a \$150 fine may be issued (see below).

Failure to comply with these 2 Co-op expectations will result in:

- A meeting with the Parent-Teacher Liaison member of the school's Board of Directors, followed up by a letter of documentation and, at the discretion of the Board, a monetary fine of \$150.
- And finally, failure to comply could result in the child being removed from the school until obligation is fulfilled.

CWELCC AGREEMENT

Avon Co-operative Nursery School has opted in and been approved for the Canada Wide Early Learning Childcare agreement.

Base fees: are any fees that all families are required to pay, like registration fees and monthly tuition. These fees are eligible for the

CWELCC reduction

Non-base fees: are fees and fines that families may receive and cannot be earned back or refunded, like NSF bank charges, late pick up fees, failure to complete committee work fees, fundraising fees and field trip fees. These fees and fines are not eligible for the CWELCC reduction.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

1. \$50 Registration Fee (\$25 base fee and \$25 non-base fee) is due at time of Registration. A refund of \$25 will be made to each family that is represented at 2 out of 3 Yearly Meetings (which are held during the school year), and who fulfill all of their obligations to the school (fundraising and committee work as outlined in the School's Handbook Accountability Policy). The remaining \$25 is an Administration Fee that is a base fee and NON-REFUNDABLE (this has been reduced as per the CWELCC guidelines).
 2. September 2023 Tuition Payment: Will be paid by PAP (or by cheque) on July 1, 2023.
 3. Fundraising Fee: Will be paid by PAP (or by cheque) on July 1, 2023. See above.
 4. October 1st - June 1st: Will be paid by PAP (or by Cheque) on the First Day of Each Month.
- NOTE: One month's notice is required for withdrawal or that month's tuition will be forfeited.

2023/2024 TUITION AMOUNTS reflecting a 50% CWELCC reduction

\$220 - 50% = \$110 - Tuesday & Thursday
\$310 - 50% = \$155 - Monday, Wednesday & Friday
\$490 - 50% = \$245 - Monday to Friday

AVON CO-OPERATIVE COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTIONS

During the course of their involvement with the Nursery School - Avon Co-operative families agree to assign to Avon Co-operative Nursery School - all rights to inventions, improvements and developments (patentable or un-patentable) that they have either made or conceived of (either solely or jointly with others, with or without the use of Avon Co-op Nursery School materials or facilities and/or resulting from their committee work for Avon Co-op Nursery School).

FUNDRAISING

This is an important part of the school's operation. We like to think of it as part of the spirit of a Co-op. It provides a significant portion of the revenue for the school and thus helps to keep fees to a minimum. It is essential for all Avon Co-op members to fundraise, although each campaign is optional.

TEACHING STAFF

All RECE staff members are registered with the College of Early Childhood Education. In addition, all staff members have current Standard First Aid and Child CPR Level C certificates. They are responsible for planning the curriculum and programs for the children (staff job descriptions are available at the school). They are experts in this learning environment and their guidance and suggestions are important for the smooth operation of the school.

Please do not hesitate to discuss any problems or questions with the staff, at drop off or pick, email or phone calls. We do not schedule "formal" interviews to discuss your child's progress; however, we are very willing to spend some time discussing your child's progress if you choose to do so. We have always valued open communication and are willing to talk with you in any method possible. You will receive a letter from your child's teachers detailing the best way to communicate with them and the methods that they plan to use.

OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Any problems regarding the functioning of the school should be directed to the Parent Teacher Liaison, the Director or to the appropriate executive member.

Access to a child's information record is given only to the legal guardians of the child and to the regular staff of the program. No information regarding a child or his/her family shall be released, either orally or in writing, to anyone other than the legal guardians of the child or to those authorized by law to receive it.

In the case of an emergency or injury to a child, information may be released to the police authorities, medical staff attending the child, insurance company, or, in the case of abuse, the appropriate child welfare authorities.

Confidentiality of families is to be respected at all times.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Doors open at 8:00 am. Upon arrival, please place your child's belongings in their labeled cubby and put on their indoor shoes located in the bucket labeled with their teachers names. Then you may drop your child off to their classroom. **Make sure that you tell the teachers that your child has arrived so that they can be signed in before you leave.** Pick up will be from designated areas (see below). Chronic lateness will result in late fee charges. *see Disclaimer for Emergency Childcare below for more details.

Dismissal time pick up: Parents are responsible for their child as soon as they arrive at the school. The school must be informed if someone else will be picking up your child at dismissal.

DISCLAIMER FOR EMERGENCY CHILDCARE

Your child must be claimed by 12 Noon. Late fee charges will apply if consistent lateness occurs. The rate is \$1.00 per minute, payable to either Sarah Jariott or Janaya Krell. If your child is not claimed all possible attempts will be made to contact the emergency care givers listed on your emergency form, which was in the registration package. If we cannot contact anyone, Children's Aid Society will be called to provide emergency care.

ELIGIBILITY OF CHILDREN

Preschool Program: Children 30 months - 5 years of age are eligible to attend our program. The Ministry of Education has granted us a privilege that allows 20% mixed age grouping (a maximum of 2 children from 24-30 months may be placed in each group on a given day). The ratio of children in the program is 8 children to 1 teacher. These ratios are mandated by the Ministry of Education and must be followed.

Toddler Program: Children 18 – 30 months of age are eligible to attend our program. The Ministry of Education has granted us a privilege that allows 20% mixed age grouping (a maximum of 2 children from 16-18 months may be placed in the toddler classroom on a given day). The ratio of children in the program is 5 children to 1 teacher. These ratios are mandated by the Ministry of Education and must be followed.

Mixed Age Grouping: The Ministry of Education has granted us the privilege to use mixed age grouping whereby children aged 18 months to 5 years can be placed together in a class while using the ratio of 1 staff member to 5 children.

WAITING LIST POLICY

At Avon Co-operative Nursery School, the Registrar, who is a member of the Executive Committee within the Board of Directors is in charge of the enrolment and wait list for the school. The Registrar will consult with the school Supervisor about filling spaces and class lists, at any time throughout any and all processes. The Supervisor is responsible for overseeing the enrolment and wait list processes. At no time shall any family on the wait list be charged a fee for holding a space on the wait list. Confidentiality is of utmost importance when maintaining the wait list. Only people who are required to see the wait list will have access to it.

Registration Process:

Registration at Avon Co-operative Nursery School is for September through June each year. Re-registration for returning families, who are registering either a returning child or a sibling of a current child, for the following school year happens in the winter (March) for the following school year. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis and is handled through the online waitlist system (OneHSN). Families who are registering, whether they are returning families or new families, are asked to provide a Registration Fee (base fee and non-base fee) to hold their child(ren)'s spot(s). They are then required to fill out the Registration Package which becomes part of the child's file. Children's files are kept confidential. Files are always complete, including immunization records or letters of exemption, Individual Plans for Anaphylaxis or Support which are shared appropriately with staff.

Empty Spaces:

Open spaces within the school may be filled at any point during the school year, however, in an effort to maintain the best interest of the children, Avon Co-op tries to move children at appropriate times of the year.

Wait List Spaces:

In recent years, Avon Co-op's wait list has been minimal. However, the wait list operates on a first come, first serve basis. Spaces are offered to the family who has been on the wait list the longest. If that family turns the space down, it is offered to the next person in line. Families who are holding a space on the Wait List may choose to register for the following school year immediately following returning families and before new families. If families inquire about their location on the wait list, either the Registrar or the Director may explain the process and give the family a clear idea of their location and number on the wait list while ensuring that the family understands the registration process. If the family asks to see their position on our wait list, all identifying information of other children/families on the waitlist will be hidden from view by blacking out the columns/rows.

Withdrawal Process:

If a family chooses to withdraw from the program, they are asked to provide 30 days (1 month) notice. They are also asked to complete the withdrawal form found in the school's handbook. When notice is given that a space is to become vacant, the Registrar may begin the process of contacting the families on the waitlist to fill the space(s).

ADDRESSING PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Should a parent/guardian have an issue or concern with the program, staff or administration of the school during their time at Avon Co-operative Nursery School there are methods for resolution.

Parents/Guardians can bring forward their concerns in one of the following ways:

- By speaking with either the Director or Administrative Assistant in the office, between the hours of 8 a.m. through Noon, Monday to Friday, September through June; excluding holidays.
- By emailing their concern to the Parent-Teacher Liaison, who is a member of the Board of Directors of the nursery school and is responsible for handling concerns or issues with regard to committee work, staff and program satisfaction. The Parent-Teacher Liaison can be contacted at avoncoopliaison@gmail.com.

Response to Issues and Concerns:

- The Administrative Assistant and/or Director will respond to the issue or concern immediately where appropriate or they shall take the concern to the Executive Members of the Board of Directors should the situation be more serious in nature and a resolution cannot be reached immediately. The Administrative Assistant or Supervisor shall ensure follow-up to the concerned parent/guardian within a reasonable time frame (one week).
- The Parent-Teacher Liaison will respond to any issues or concerns immediately upon receiving the information and will handle the issues or concerns by passing the information on to the most relevant party (i.e. the Director or Executive Members of the

Board of Directors) and if necessary, help to troubleshoot and offer a response in a timely manner (one week) to the concerned parent/guardian.

Opportunity to Offer Formal Feedback:

- At the Spring General Meeting of the Membership of Avon Co-operative Nursery School, an opportunity to complete a Program Satisfaction Survey is provided. This survey covers areas such as Programming, Teachers and Staff, Administration, and Committee Work.

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY: For information about applying for the child care subsidy please contact The City of Stratford Social Services Department at 1-800-669-2948 or 519-271-3773 ext. 254 and speak to an Intake Clerk. The link to the Child Care Subsidy Form can be found on Avon Co-op's website.

HOLIDAYS: The school holidays correspond with the public school calendar, with the exception of PD days. They include Thanksgiving, 2 weeks at Christmas, Family Day, 1 week at March break, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day and July and August.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING: If the school has to be closed due to severe weather conditions, families are encouraged to check the Avon Co-Op Facebook page and listen to the radio. School closures will be announced on CJCS (local radio station). Families will also be contacted via email. Families will NOT be reimbursed for these days.

COMMUNICATION: Please check your child's cubby/backpack each day for any items that may be sent home.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING: When children are playing and having fun, sometimes accidents/incidents or injuries occur. If this happens, staff are responsible for completing an Accident/Incident Report. This will be shared with you and you will receive a copy. The original will be kept in the child's file after it has been reviewed and signed by the parent/guardian.

PARKING: The parking lot off of Huntingdon Ave is available for use when dropping off and picking up. Please remember to drive cautiously through it as it can be quite busy with other cars and children walking to and from the playground area.

DUTY TO REPORT: All Early Childhood Professionals are bound by a 'Duty to Report' under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*. This means that if there is suspected abuse, neglect or other concerns with a child(ren) in our care, we are responsible for sharing those concerns with the appropriate authorities (for example, The Children's Aid Society).

ALLERGIES and ANAPHYLAXIS (from our Anaphylactic Policy)

Allergies change every year along with changing membership and therefore procedures are reviewed twice annually. Some children have reactions to certain foods, while others have a serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis which can be life threatening. The allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, or exercise. To reduce the risk of exposure to these causative agents in the nursery school there will be signs posted in each classroom detailing the allergies within the school, both anaphylactic and otherwise. These foods will be avoided at snack time, and in materials/food that might be used for craft and sensory activities.

Parents must advise the nursery school if there is an allergy on the child's health information form in the registration package. This includes any medical condition including anaphylaxis. The allergy is printed on the back of the child's name tag, as well as written on the allergy chart. The chart and a photo of any child involved are posted in every play area.

An Individual Plan and Emergency Procedure must be completed by the parent if the allergy is diagnosed by a doctor and labeled life-threatening.

Information on life-threatening allergies will be provided to the staff first, then the parents and volunteers. The parent/guardian of an enrolled child with an anaphylactic allergy will provide the input on the child's individual plan, including the emergency procedure. This allergy will then be communicated to all the families enrolled in the nursery school at the Committee Meeting and by email.

Parents with anaphylactic children, children with sensitivities, and children with food intolerances may be asked to supply the full snack daily for their child, to ensure that there is no accidental cross contamination of the child's food. We will ensure that the child eats only the food and drink that has been sent from home.

Emergency allergy medication (example: EpiPens) will be kept with the child's teacher. This medication will always be taken on field trips.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION (from our Medication Administration Policy)

If the administration of medication is required, the medication must be delivered to the Director in the original container and accompanied by written authorization from the parent. Please obtain forms from the school. The forms must be completed in full before medication can be administered. Each container must be clearly labeled with the child's name, name of the drug, dosage, date of purchase and instructions for administration and storage. The medication will be stored as directed and kept in a locked container. For each child receiving medication, a record will be kept in the school Identification & Emergency Contact book. This policy is only for exceptional circumstances where immediate action or treatment is required, i.e. allergic reaction, special needs child, etc.

IMMUNIZATION/NON-IMMUNIZATION: All children registered to this school must have all medical files fully completed before admission. Each child must have complete and up-to-date immunization records included in this file. A child may not attend nor a parent act in a volunteer capacity without acceptable medical records. If the child has not been immunized due to religious beliefs, or medical reasons, the appropriate Exemption Form must be completed and notarized. This is in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act and the local Medical Officer of Health. Please contact the school to obtain a copy of the Exemption Form, if applicable.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

The following situations would require exclusion from the school:

- fever within 24 hours
- strep throat
- ringworm
- green mucous discharge from nose
- continuous dry, hacking cough
- whooping cough

- diarrhea (two or more episodes, or diarrhea with fever over 38.5 C, or bloody diarrhea) (48 hours)
- vomiting (must be vomit/diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning) * 48 hours with the current regulations in place by HPPH
- Chicken Pox - Return when well enough to participate in all activities
- pinkeye (conjunctivitis) with discharge of pus that is yellow or white
- rash (with fever and/or change in behaviour)

***Avon Co-op follows the guidelines of the Huron Perth Public Health**

If a child develops symptoms of illness during school hours, the parents, or if the parent is unavailable, the person designated for emergencies, shall be notified to pick the child up. The telephone number left with the school for emergency purposes must be that of someone who is able to come to get the child - not the family physician. If your emergency contact or phone numbers change throughout the year you MUST inform the administrator. Identification and Emergency forms must be accurate to meet the Child Care and Early Years Act requirements.

CLOTHING: Send your child to school in practical play clothes which wash easily. Be sure to dress appropriately for outdoor activities (i.e. boots, puddle pants, jacket, etc.). Please label all outdoor clothing. Flipflops are NOT permitted - they are dangerous when children are running and climbing. Scarves are to be worn inside snowsuits/coats to prevent accidents.

ENRICHMENT & FIELD TRIPS/TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION: Enrichment activities and/or field trips are planned throughout the school year in order to extend and enhance our program objectives. Most of our enrichment planning focuses on special events/visitors coming into the nursery school. When any field trips are planned to visit somewhere outside of the school, advance notice will be given to families and each child will receive a Permission Form to be filled out and returned. The permission form will contain all the necessary details surrounding the outing. Families will be required to provide their own transportation. If you cannot drive it is your responsibility to make alternate arrangements, i.e. grandparents, relatives or other families within the school are options. Avon Co-op will not be responsible for transferring / installing car seats. Some field trips require a parent to attend, this requirement is outlined in the information page for each field trip. If you choose not to send our child on a field trip that day's tuition is NON-REFUNDABLE.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICY: As of January 1st, 2024, a province wide policy has been implemented to all childcare centers across Ontario. (1) Parents/guardians must inform the Director and/or educator(s) if another person (not listed on the child(rens) approved contact card) is to pick up or drop off the child(ren). When a previously approved person (other than the parent or guardian) is to pick up or drop off, please mention this to the educators and/or Director as well. (2) If a child is to be late (past 9:30 AM) for whatever reason, the parent/guardian MUST inform the school, either via email or phone call. This email can be sent to the director at: avoncoopdirector@gmail.com. (3) If a child does not arrive at school by 9:45 AM, the educator(s) will inform the office. If the office has not heard from the parent/guardian of the child, they will begin attempting to contact the parent/guardian. If the office is unable to reach the parent/guardian at this time, they will begin attempting to contact the otherwise approved contacts on the child(rens) emergency card. *If the office has still not reached anyone, and the time is past 10:00 AM, They will, under the "Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy", have to contact and report the child(rens) absence to the local Police department to conduct a wellness check.* (4) Where a child is not picked up from school by 12:00 PM, the educator(s) will inform the Director and a call will be made to the parent/guardian of the child. If contact is not made to a parent/guardian of the child, the office will attempt to contact an otherwise approved person(s) from the child(rens) emergency contact card. If the office is unable to reach a person to safely pick up the child by 12:45 PM, a call will be made to the local Children's Aid Society to report the incident.

NSF PAYMENTS: There is a \$30 service charge (non base fee) for NSF payments. Please contact the administrative coordinator (phone number and e-mail at the front of this handbook) to prevent an NSF situation.

SAFETY AT SCHOOL:

SERIOUS INJURY/OCCURRENCES: In the event of any serious injury first aid would be administered immediately, parents contacted, as well as an ambulance if necessary. Serious Occurrences Reports must be filled out and filed with the Ministry of

Education within 24 hours of the occurrence and must also be posted on the premises for 10 days.

FIRE SAFETY: The written procedure (approved by the local fire chief) for fire safety is posted in each of the 4 rooms and the gym. A fire drill is conducted twice per month – one for the 2 morning children and one for the 3 morning children. Children and staff leave the school together and proceed across the parking lot to the grassy area where the children will line up with their own class and teachers. The Director will get a final headcount of all children in attendance and ensure that the number is the same as the daily attendance. When the fire alarm has ceased ringing, the children and staff will proceed back into the school in groups, maintaining safety at all times throughout the parking lot. The Director and/or Administrative Assistant will follow behind and help accordingly

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES: As described in section 68.1 of Ontario Regulation 137/15, Avon Co-operative Nursery School has detailed procedures which outline how various emergency situations will be handled and dealt with in an appropriate and safe manner. If you wish to see these procedures, please speak with Melissa Wright. Regarding communication of any Emergency Situation (ex. Lockdown, Hold & Secure, Bomb Threat, Disaster that requires Evacuation, External Disaster (environmental), Natural Disaster (Tornado, Major Earthquake): communication will be handled by email or by phone, whichever is deemed more appropriate given the situation. Emergency phone calls can take a considerable amount of time, however, a personal phone call may be more appropriate than a mass email in various situations. Our Emergency Shelter location is St. Aloysius Catholic School, 228 Avondale Ave.

SMOKING POLICY: In accordance with the Ontario Smoke Free Act, Avon Co-Operative Nursery School is a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited at all times in the school whether the children are present or not. This includes the outdoor areas of the school as well. Smoke free signs are posted throughout the school at entrances, exits, and washrooms. Staff, students, and volunteers are provided with this information prior to commencement of employment.

SUN POLICY: Parents must apply sunscreen at home prior to bringing your child to school. If they bring it to school it must be clearly labeled and we will apply it before going outdoors. We request that each child has their own sunscreen as this prevents any skin sensitivities. Remember: SLIP! SLAP! SLOP!!!! Slip on a shirt, slap on a hat, and slop on sunscreen! If the UV index is very high outside time will be altered throughout the day. This change in program will be posted when needed.

VISITORS: Visitors are welcome to observe the program at any time. A phone call to the school to inform the teachers is recommended.

Program Statement Implementation Policy

The Program Statement of Avon Co-operative Nursery School is a living document that guides our program practices. It is reviewed frequently with significant thought given to it by the Director and all of the Educators. The staff meets to discuss the contents of the Program Statement before each school year. At this time (or at any time it is felt it is needed), the Program Statement can and will be revised to fit the current vision, methodology and practices used to maintain our high quality programming. Because the staff are all involved in the evolution of the Program Statement, it is attainable for everyone to meet the goals and approaches of the program.

Because our Program Statement is what guides our programming within our school, ensuring that staff are following the goals and approaches outlined within it is very important.

This policy strives to ensure that the Program Statement Goals and Approaches will be met as well as outlining basic and fundamental guidelines for practice. To ensure that all of this will be achieved, this policy will be reviewed initially at the beginning of employment, and then reviewed twice per school year with all staff.

This policy is included in our handbook annually. Parents are required to sign to acknowledge that they have read and understand the handbook in its entirety.

Students and volunteers will read and sign this policy prior to beginning their placement at this school.

Program Statement Implementation documents are written by the Director at a minimum of one time per school year; however it is our practice to write these documents twice per school year. The Program Statement Implementation documents have 4 sections included. The first section (Expectation for Implementation) covers basic employee goals. The second section (Process for Monitoring Compliance) covers observations made by the Director about each employee's individual performance. The third section (Observation of Prohibited Practices) allows for indication of this. The fourth and final section (Program Statement Goal Accomplishment) allows for the Director to record if and how each staff member is working toward the achievement of the goals that are outlined in the Program Statement of Avon Co-op. The Director will discuss the outcome of these documents with employees on an individual basis, generally in a meeting format with a Board Member present. The Vice President generally assumes the role of discussing the Program Statement Implementation document with each employee with the Supervisor.

Prohibited Practices:

The following is a list of Prohibited Practices. None of these shall be used at Avon Co-operative Nursery School at any time by teachers, staff, students or volunteers. This is consistent with our Program Statement and the Implementation of it (Ontario Regulation 137/15 Section 6, sub-section 6.7

(a) corporal punishment of the child;

(b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the

purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;

(c) locking the exits of the child care 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;

(d) use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;

(e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or

(f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Contravention of Program Statement Implementation Practices or Engaging in a Prohibited Practice:

All staff and volunteers are expected and required to comply with this program policy. If a staff engages in physical abuse, or fails to comply to this policy, or the Child Care and Early Years Act, a verbal warning by the supervisor will be given, OR a written warning, OR dismissed immediately. In addition, the College of Early Childhood Educators will be contacted to disclose the contravention.

In order to support staff and help to ensure success, there are several proactive measures that can be taken before more extreme measures are invoked, if applicable. For example, extra help could be provided in a mentoring situation, articles may be provided for the staff to read and reflect upon and professional development may be encouraged to ensure the growth of the staff member.

To determine which disciplinary measure to take, these aspects will be considered:

- seriousness of the contravention
- actual or potential risk or harm to the child
- past record of employer
- any previous disciplinary action taken

Monitoring Program Statement Implementation of Employees and Volunteers

To monitor the employees, the Supervisor will make unexpected visits into the rooms, taking note of the employee's words and actions.

Each employee will monitor the volunteers and/or students in their specific room. Board members and parents likewise will monitor the director, teachers and administrative assistant, and be allowed to discuss our practices with us. If there are any concerns or uncertainties about a child or volunteer, these will be discussed at the end of the program, with guidance and suggestions given.

Self-Evaluations are also used to monitor behaviour as these reflections are very helpful to monitor staff's best practices and encourage self-reflection.

Child Guidance Policy

Objective:

The purpose of discipline is to help the child develop appropriate control over his/her behaviour. Our child guidance method consists of verbal communication. We talk to the child about what he is doing, explaining, WHY he is not to engage in the behaviour. This helps them to understand cause and effect relationships, and thus make predictions about the probable outcome of their behaviour.

Consequences:

The child is removed from the situation and explained why he cannot behave in that manner. We use our feelings as a base for the explanation, maintaining eye contact i.e. It makes us angry, or, I don't like it. The children are encouraged to use these expressions, so they can express how it feels when it hurts using their 'words' not their physical force. Following the explanation the child is directed to another activity and invited to return to the initial one when appropriate behaviour can be shown. The child may need some time alone to regain his composure and adjust to these mixed feelings. Each child may not need this time alone and some may find this overwhelming. Teachers must know the child they are working with, and know their limits to adequately make the situation a positive one.

THE USE OF APPROPRIATE PERSONAL FEELINGS WHEN TALKING TO THE CHILD ARE THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES.

Techniques for Fostering & Developing Positive Self Esteem

1. Positive re-enforcement is used consistently and daily with all the children. Praise is highly effective. Recognize positive behaviour, and act on it – verbally, or through a smile, nod, gentle back rub, “thumbs up”, or a hug.
2. Show you care – encourage them, promote discussions, and listen.
3. Have a cheerful attitude – be enthusiastic, laugh with them.

4. Offer choices – make sure they are clear and understood by the child, and acceptable to you.
5. Be flexible – it is okay to change your mind. Clearly explain your decision and reason for the changes.

P - Personal
R - Recognition
A - Always
I - Improves
S - Self
E - Esteem

Policy for the Supervision of Volunteers and Students

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a system for the supervision of volunteers and placement students who may be participating in the programming at Avon Co-operative Nursery School. The intent of the policy is to support the safety and well being of nursery school students and to ensure that the presence of students and volunteers at the school enhances the school's programming.

Policy Statement

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.

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. No child will be supervised at any time by a person under 18 years of age.

Supervising Staff

The Supervisor will be responsible for the general supervision of volunteers and placement students. The teacher with whom the volunteer or student is working will be responsible for their direct supervision and any documentation that this requires. For example, the Program Statement Implementation form or any documentation required by a student's school. The Administrator and the Director will be responsible for ensuring that all documentation is in order, including but not limited to criminal reference checks, scheduling and providing orientation.

Student and Volunteer Supervision Procedures:

Before a student or volunteer can participate in programming at Avon Co-Op Nursery School they will be interviewed by the Supervisor to ensure that they are a suitable candidate for placement.

A high school co-operative education student seeking placement must provide the endorsement of their educational faculty. College students and adult volunteers must provide a criminal reference check and may be requested to provide additional references at the discretion of the Director.

All co-operative education students must provide an up-to-date immunization record to the Supervisor or

Administrator. **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Supervisor of Avon Co-operative Nursery School 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/.
- * 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.

Participation in Programming

Volunteers at Avon Co-op participate on the understanding that they will be actively involved in nursery school programming for young children. They must be prepared to participate under the direction of the Supervisor to ensure that the presence of the volunteer enhances the programming at the school and meets the set goals of the volunteer experience.

During the initial interview, goals and planned outcomes of the volunteer placement will be discussed. It is understood that any goal requirements (such as for high school co-operative students) will be completed at the discretion of the Supervisor and/or the teachers and will not interfere with the quality of programming for the students of Avon Co-op.

Expectations of Volunteers

In order to ensure that volunteers/students gain the most benefit from their placement at Avon Co-op and to ensure that their presence enhances the school's programming the following are expectations during their participation in any placement at the school:

- * Volunteers and students will dress in a manner appropriate for a nursery school environment where young children are

present

* Volunteers and students will at all times use language appropriate to a nursery school environment where young children are present

• Volunteers will participate with classroom activities as directed by teaching staff.

* Any concerns on the part of the volunteer should be raised with their assigned key staff member or the Supervisor in a timely manner and at a time when children are not present.

Students under the age of 18

Students under the age of 18 are not required to provide or obtain a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector. If a student turns 18 years old while in placement, he/she shall obtain and submit a statement that discloses every previous finding of guilt of the student under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (Canada) if the person received an adult sentence. If the student turns 19 years old, while in placement, he/she shall obtain a Criminal Reference Check with Vulnerable Sector within one month of his/her birthday.

Implementation

The Board of Directors and staff of the Avon Co-Operative Nursery School will be responsible for the implementation, review and evaluation of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed twice per school year with regular staff. Supply staff will be required to review and sign it as well at least once per school year. Volunteers/Students will be required to sign at the beginning of their time at Avon Co-op.

DISMISSAL OF A CHILD FROM THE PROGRAM

The philosophy of the nursery school is to be open to all children, including those with special needs. Every effort will be made to make the program work for all children and most often these efforts will be successful. However there may be times when the difficulties being experienced by a child cannot be resolved satisfactorily and are of such a serious nature that dismissal may need to be considered. Some examples are: verbal or physical abuse of staff and/or children, many complaints about a child from parents of other children in the program, behaviours which are a significant safety concern, or, an inability by a child to follow rules and routines therefore constantly disrupting the program for others. When making the decision about dismissal consideration is given to the fact that children do experience an adjustment period in new settings.

When a child is experiencing significant difficulty within the nursery school program, it is important to take whatever actions are possible to resolve the issue. The teacher shall use behaviour management strategies. If this does not work then:

1. The teacher shall meet with the parents to clearly outline the issues at hand and to develop strategies for resolving the issues.
2. The resource consultant will assess the child and then contact any and all external agencies on behalf of the staff and the parents.
3. Assessment of the child's progress will be regularly communicated to the child's parents.
4. If the difficulties cannot be resolved then a decision to not continue the child will be made by the executive in consultation with the teacher and resource consultant.

FINAL THOUGHTS

When parents, children and teachers learn and work together new ideas grow - thus creating a strong school- home partnership. It is our hope that together we will make this a fun and important year in your child's early development.

WITHDRAWAL FORM

AVON CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL requires this written withdrawal notice to be received by the registrar (30 days prior to the first day of the month of withdrawal). If such notice is not given and the child is withdrawn, one full month payment will be retained by the nursery school All remaining cheques will be returned

To the Registrar:

I would like to withdraw my child's membership at AVON CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL effective:

My reason for withdrawing my child is:

My suggestions and/or criticisms are:

_____ DATE - Month / Day / Year Signature of

Parent/Guardian _____

DATE - Month / Day / Year Signature of Registrar

**AVON CO-OPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL INC.
P.O. Box 21008, Stratford, Ontario N5A 7V4
Avondale United Church, 194 Avondale Avenue
(Huntingdon Ave. entrance) 519-271-6400**