

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

PROGRAM STATEMENT: Effective May, 2016

Grand Avenue Children's Centre is committed to the **well-being** of each child and seek out opportunities to strengthen connections in our community; **engaging** our stakeholders and fostering **expression** by encouraging self-discovery and continuous learning for both children and staff members; including multi-generational, art and music experiences.

Methodology

Grand Avenue Children's Centre is committed to providing the highest standards of quality for children, family and community using "How Does Learning Happen?" Ontario Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) as a guide under the Child Care and Early Years Act.

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) is a document to be used for the purposes of guiding licensed childcare programs. This professional learning resource will support early years' programs and will inspire critical reflection discussion among the staff, the children and their families (minister's policy statement on programming and pedagogy made under the Child Care and Early Years Act subsection 55(3)2014)

Play-Based Learning

Grand Ave Children's Centre believes that encouraging children to think creatively enables them to succeed in a complex and ever changing world. Purposeful play enables children to learn and discover at their own rate in unstructured and structure initiations of play.

Grand Ave views children as thinkers by encouraging them to make choices and decisions that lead them to reflect about their world.

Our centre's ambition is to provide a secure, caring and stimulating environment in which relationships can evolve and each child's identity and sense of self is valued.

We shall facilitate play in a pedagogical direction for children to develop in the indoor and outdoor environments.

Governance

Grand Ave Board of Directors **will support the Ministry of Education regulations** to foster the **belonging** of each child, family and staff member; providing professional, respectful, inclusive child centered care in London's Old South community. The Board of Directors has a mandate to provide leadership, accountability, financial and evaluation of the ongoing operations of the Grand Ave Children's Centre. Our Board regulations stipulate a minimum of 5 meetings annually, one being Annual General Meeting where all parents and interested community partners may attend and members will have the

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

opportunity to vote on the regulations that guide our Centre.

The Program Statement has been developed with input from parents, staff and Board members and approved by the Board of Directors. We will ensure consultation with our stakeholders is undertaken and feedback incorporated into this "living" document going forward; tabling Ministry "Questions for Reflection" for discussion during Board, Annual General Meeting and Staff meetings to ensure continuous improvements to the four pillars for our children, families and staff.

The Board of Directors will establish terms of reference and appoint committee members to oversee the Finance, Human Resources and Operations of the Centre to confirm all policies and procedures are reviewed on an annual basis and we are adhering to the Ministry approved Program Statement.

Centre Goals

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

Every child is developing a sense of self, health and **well being**

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

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

Program Activities

Children's interests are valuable to their learning and offer a rich variety of experiences. Our program offers opportunities as follows:

- ❖ Drama, music, dance and visual arts
- ❖ Physical literacy
- ❖ Language, literacy, numeracy
- ❖ Nature, science and technology

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

- ❖ Construction, design, blocks (fine motor/gross motor)
- ❖ Daily opportunities for physical literacy and active outdoor play
- ❖ Opportunities for creative arts
- ❖ Rest time for children who require it, based on their development
- ❖ Intergenerational opportunities

Program Design

- ❖ Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.
- ❖ Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry
- ❖ Provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences
- ❖ Offer opportunities to create authentic lasting relationships with others in the program.

CORE SUPPORTING PRINCIPLES

BELONGING

Grand Ave Children's strives to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families in our programs by creating positive interactions and collaboration of families.

Communication

Grand Ave works with families and children as a team by fostering collaborative and positive interactions, communication and relationships.

Each class will display family photos, pictures of special days/fieldtrips and artwork. All families and children will be greeted each day with a smile and welcome greeting. Children are encouraged to bring special items from home to be included in the program such as stuffed animals, books etc.

Collaboration

Families have ongoing communication both at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day. Grand Ave Children's has an open door policy for their families so that are able to come be a part of the program at their leisure creating a family oriented environment of community.

Grand Ave Children's Centre builds trust with their families and children by inviting them to visit and

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

transition into the centre with a flexible routine / schedule prepared jointly by the families and staff. This allows families to participate in the program before leaving their children in our care.

We believe that a relationship of trust is the basis of a good foundation for the GACC team to work towards with children. As competent individuals, children are active participants in resolving conflicts. We encourage them to come up with ideas and solutions to problems, learn responsibility along with social skills.

Grand Ave Children's Centre is committed to working collaborating with all of our community partners to meet the mutual goal of providing the best possible interest of children and families.

WELL BEING

Grand Ave Children's Centre understands that the early years set the foundation to establishing and nurturing health, safety and well-being for children in our program.

Educators

The staff are educators and are consistent and gentle. Each child is given individual attention during the day and special attention should he/she need it. Each group is made up of children developmentally at the same stage. Each child feels comfortable and valued.

Educators support children in developing strategies to remain calm and to regulate their emotions while recognizing the effects of their actions on others.

Behaviour Management

All prohibited practices including corporal punishment, harsh or belittling discipline including verbal belittling or threatening, depriving basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding, locking the exits of the child care centre for the purposes of confining a child or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children, confinement or restraint for the purpose of limiting a child's movement is not part of the practice or values of Grand Ave Children's Centre.

All educators, students and volunteers must follow the GACC child abuse policy and comply with all aspects of the investigation and outcomes.

The Centre Director will ensure that a written record of the monitoring of all employees, volunteers and placement students behaviour management practices is completed annually or immediately following an observed or reported prohibited practices. All written records of monitoring will be kept on file for 3 years. Placement students or volunteers will not be left alone with children.

Health and Safety

The health and safety of all adults and children is an important aspect of GACC program. Grand Ave

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

Children's Centre meets, and strives to exceed all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and local government bylaws.

Health and safety is posted outside our program rooms on parent communication boards and others are provided in our Parent Handbook.

Nutrition

Grand Ave Children's Centre follows Canada Food Guide to develop menus that are both nutritious and appealing for children.

Menus can be viewed on the parent communication boards and on our website.

We accommodate dietary or religious food requirements for children in our program.

ENGAGEMENT

Parent Engagement and Communication

Grand Ave Children's Centre believes that families are the experts on their children. Therefore, we encourage and practice open communication with the families. We aim to foster outreach, engagement and communication with families about our program and their children's learning experiences. We aim for affordable, safe, reliable, high quality licensed child care.

Daily Communication books are available as well as children's learning stories/ documentation portfolios are accessible daily.

In addition, interaction with program staff offer many opportunities for parent feedback; involvement such as surveys, communication box, parent consultations, written and face –face communication and family nights.

We involve parents and other important adults in various events and activities at our program such as fieldtrips, concerts and annual meeting initiatives. This connects them to their children's early development and enhances the child's learning.

The partnerships with the families support our program in many ways:

- ❖ Helps to meet the child's needs as families know their children best and are the first and most powerful influences on learning and development.
- ❖ Builds a powerful relationship between the centre, staff and families by understanding family structures, values, language and their culture.

Community Partners

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

Community partners supporting children, families and staffs is a key commitment of Grand Ave.

We provide learning opportunities and practical work experience in the areas of programming and management to members of the community through the recruitment, placement, training and recognition of volunteers and students on placement both from the secondary and post-secondary education levels.

Volunteers and students on placement enhance the high quality care and individual attention given to the children in the program.

Grand Ave Children's Centre has many community partners, individuals, organizations and agencies who support children and families financially or through support.

We collaborate with these partners and continue to create more opportunities to expand these relationships on behalf of our children and families.

We highlight our inter-generational partnership with Grand Wood Park Seniors residence by engagement and learning opportunities throughout each month (Sept –June). We also have a community partnership with the Old South community by engagement and support through membership in the Old South Business Association.

Continuous Professional Learning

Grand Ave Children's Centre hires professional staff that have a positive and sensitive attitude towards children and families. Our hiring practices provide individuals of all backgrounds the opportunity for employment.

We believe that everyone has value and all staff are entitled to be respected supported and treated fairly.

All full time staff working with children has completed/practice early children education. All ECE's are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. All staff attend mandatory professional mentor meetings and are committed to continuous professional learning. Formal professional learning is vital but we also believe that most professional growth happens day to day, as our staff co-learn with children and each other as self-reflecting professionals.

Positive adult child interaction is on-going. Staff work closely with children to extend their learning by encouraging them to build upon their existing awareness. Staff develop programs that support early learning on a weekly basis based on observations they make of children's interest and curiosity.

Learning is extended, leading to deeper investigation with materials and the environment. Staff plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.

The Centre Director reviews weekly program plans and pedagogical documentation to ensure they meet Grand Ave program statement requirements. The Director demonstrates pedagogical leadership by

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

observing each classroom daily and engaging in conversation with educators and what methods for this learning to happen. Quarterly, the Director completes staff mentor plans, classroom checks and program monitoring to ensure that program quality indicators are being met.

EXPRESSION

Grand Ave Children's Centre inclusive programming leads to children's sense of belonging. Positive learning environments and practices focused on play-based learning encourage children's self-expression, communication, self-regulation and their ability to deal with stress.

Observation

We aim to be aware of foster, support, encourage, respond to and document the many ways in which children express themselves.

Inclusive

Our inclusive learning environments welcome children of all abilities. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusiveness is vital for optimal development and learning.

- ❖ Each child is an individual
- ❖ Recognize each child as having equal rights to participate in program activities, trips, events.
- ❖ Groups' small enough so no child is over looked
- ❖ Recognize and respect unique qualities of each child and family
- ❖ Create and establish programming strategies to value foster an inclusive learning environment in which every child can participate
- ❖ Routines are conducted by guiding small groups of children thru transitions times
- ❖ Children accomplishes each task at his/her own rate and are never made to participate in any activity that they are not ready for

Play-based learning

Play based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Play allows them actively construct challenges and expands their own understanding through making connections to prior experiences. Play is responsive to each child's unique learning style and capitalizes on their curiosity vision and creativity.

Our plans are developed over a period of a week and coincide with the interest of the children.

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

Language development is fostered daily by stories, songs, games and finger plays. Books are available. Puzzles are used to develop spatial concepts, sorting, matching, as well as science discovery is taught and explored.

Each day children enjoy outdoor activity learning to run, jump, climb, developing coordination, strength and risks in a safe environment. Our outdoor activity also allows children to enjoy nature and open green space, gardening and neighbourhood discovery walks.

REFLECTING AND ASSESSMENT

Pedagogical documentation allows our staff to learn about how children think and learn. Educators reflect and assess their program and environment daily to ensure that the program is meeting individual needs of children and the group, and that their environment is set up according to the interests of the group.

Staff reflection and assessment

- ❖ Valuing children experiences and helping them to reflect back on those experiences in their learning environment
- ❖ Learning together with the children involving the meaningful adults in their lives
- ❖ Staff become lifelong learners with children about learning
- ❖ Keep communication ongoing with families about children's experiences
- ❖ Self-reflection opportunity for program staff as they participate in continuous professional learning

Centre Director

Grand Ave Children's Centre Director will assess the environment, educator interactions, planning process and physical environments of each class.

Board of Directors

Grand Ave Children's Centre Program Statement is a living document and will be updated as necessary to stay in alignment with the Minister's Statement and reviewed annually at a minimum by the Board of Directors.

Reference Documents

- ❖ How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- ❖ Minister's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy made under the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014

Ministry Approval Date:

Grand Avenue Children's Centre Program Statement

- ❖ Child Care and Early Years 2014
- ❖ Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) guiding principles

Ministry Approval Date: