

# Parent Handbook

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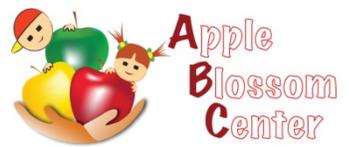
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## PHILOSOPHY

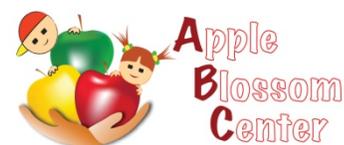
Apple Blossoms Center is a community-based daycare committed to providing quality services, supporting the development of the individual child and enhancing family life in a warm, caring environment.

We see children as active participants in their learning, and we aspire to support each child's learning through our programmed activities. Our programs are geared towards the whole child and to support each child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical and creative growth. As part of a group, the children learn the importance of cooperation, problem solving and sharing. At the same time, we encourage each child to express their individual ideas and we work to promote their self-esteem and independence. The children are encouraged to explore creatively, make independent choices, and learn through play in a supportive and caring atmosphere.

Apple Blossoms also believes in providing children with a non-sexist and anti-biased environment that is respectful of cultural diversity and of each child as a unique individual. Our basic belief is that children thrive on encouragement, positive role-modeling and trust.

We at Apple Blossoms are proud of the work we do and the services we provide, and are respectful of the trust invested in us. We believe our first obligation is to protect the physical, emotional and social well-being of each and every child. Our objective is to help each child build strong foundations, which will support their healthy development, both as individuals and as members of their community.

**Apple Blossoms Center is *"where your children bloom!"***



## ABOUT OUR CENTRE

We are a community-based centre licensed by the Ontario Ministry of Education and following all guidelines set out in the Child Care Early Years Act (CCEYA)

We accept children from 18 Months to 12 years of age, who are accommodated in the following groups:

Group	Max. enrollment	Age	Staff/Child ratio	Duration
Toddler	15	1.5 years – 2.5 years	1:5	<b>7:00 – 6:30</b>
Preschool	24	2 ½ to 5	1:8	<b>7:00 – 6:30</b>
Sr. Preschool	23	4 – 5	1:8	<b>7:00 – 6:30</b>
Kindergarten & School Age	26	4-12	1:13/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After School</li> <li>• PA Days</li> <li>• Winter Break</li> <li>• March Break</li> <li>• Summer Camp</li> </ul>

### **Full-Time Day Care Program**

The full-time program serves the ages 18 months to 5 years of age (Toddler and Preschool) and operates from 7:00 am to 6:30 pm five days per week for all 12 months.

We provide an after-school program to children the ages of 6-12 years(3-6pm).

### **Kindergarten and School Age**

We offer an after-school program from 3pm-6:30pm as well as PA Days, March Break, Summer Camp and Winter Break.

Limited Bussing Service is available for Kindergarten and School Aged children. This bussing service will take children to and from Becket Farm, Fred Varley, Stonebridge and Castlemore Public Schools at their regular schedule school hours. The center does not cater to children’s extra-curricular activities located at the schools. If a child requires earlier drop off or later pick up times than the regular school hours, the parent(s) will have to make alternate arrangements for their children.

When children are not in school – PA days, March break and summer holidays the program is available from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

## Hours of Operation

Apple Blossoms operates year-round, Monday to Friday 7am-6:30pm, EXCEPT on the dates listed below:

**New Years Day**  
**Family Day**  
**Good Friday**  
**Easter Monday**  
**Victoria Day**  
**Canada Day**  
**Simcoe Day (Civic Holiday)**  
**Labour Day**  
**Thanksgiving**  
**Christmas Day**  
**Boxing Day**

*\*please note that these days are not subtracted from the monthly fees*

## PROGRAMS

### Toddlers

Our toddler program caters to children aged 18 to 30 months and provides a safe, nurturing family atmosphere where the children explore and learn about the environment around them with an emphasis on self-esteem, socialization with others, language and self-help skills while engaged in stimulating activities that promote cognitive, physical and emotional development.

### Preschool

Our preschool program caters to children aged 2.5 years – 4 years of age. The focus for the younger preschoolers (our juniors) program is on socialization with others, the beginnings of printing, math and mandarin language while continuing to encourage independence and self-help skills.

The primary focus for the senior preschool group is preparing them for kindergarten by enhancing their reading, spelling and printing skills, early math concepts, problem-solving skills, science concepts and exploring the world around them using the Learning without Tears program.

### Montessori Preschool

Children will learn within an “intentional” environment providing children with the chance to explore and manipulate Montessori materials. It is also designed to meet children’s inner need for order and help elicit their natural curiosity. This program is offered as full day (7am- 6pm).



### **Kindergarten and School Age**

The educators will provide extracurricular activities for once the children are completed their studies. These activities place emphasis on individual and group development and include creative/art, science, dramatic play, cognitive, gross motor, sensory and literacy. The program is based on age appropriate goals to aid in development of communication skills, social skills, organization, the ability to problem solve, as well as fine and gross motor skills. Mandarin Lessons are provided after children have completed their studies.

### **Special Activities**

During the summer months, special age-appropriate field trips will be planned. Please note, that there may be an extra cost associated with certain field trips. We always encourage parents/guardians to come along with us. A consent form for each trip must be signed beforehand as well as a Police cheque must be obtained for us to keep on file.

Other special events will include entertainers coming to the center for the purpose of educating and/or entertaining the children.

### **Birthdays and other Celebrations**

We would like to celebrate your child(ren)'s birthday at the centre. The center will celebrate all children's birthdays. In conjunction with the Food Policy and no outside food permitted, the center will make the birthday cupcakes on premise to ensure the safety of all children.

The center will also like to celebrate special occasions such as Easter, Christmas, New Years. We welcome the opportunity to learn about and join in other cultural and religious festivals. If you would like to share a special festival with us, talk to the Supervisor or your child's teacher. We can assist you in planning an activity for your child's class.

### **FIELD TRIP POLICY**

Apple Blossoms Center is responsible for the safety and supervision of the children in its care at all times. Field trips and excursions can be a wonderful learning experience for children and can provide an experience that is alternately refreshing from the norm of every day, on-site programming.

Whenever possible, the Supervisor will attend field trips and excursions with the group as a required ratio. Parents, students and volunteers are welcome to join on field trips but are required to follow regulations set forth in the Student/Volunteer supervision policy.

### **Cancellation of Field Trips**

Occasionally a field trip must be cancelled due to any of the following reasons;

- Inclement/extreme weather
- Absence of a full-time staff member
- Vendor cancelled

In the event of a cancellation, all efforts will be made to inform the parents as much in advance as possible and to postpone the trip or arrange the “back-up” trip or experience.

### **METHODS OF COMMUNICATION**

Communication is an essential element at Apple Blossoms Center. Effective communication between the parents and the staff at the Center will result in a successful program for your child, the Center hopes to achieve this in a number of ways:

#### **Bulletin Boards:**

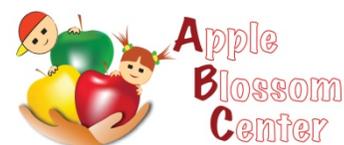
- There is a bulletin board outside each classroom where the groups daily routine and activities are posted
- There is a bulletin board in the main reception area where all important information is posted for our families.

#### **Teacher Communications:**

- The staff at Apple Blossoms Center is available to meet and discuss concerns that parents may have in regards to their child, please see the staff member or the supervisor in regards to setting up an appointment.
- Staff will send notices of any concerns regarding the child. These notices will be sent through our See Saw app
- For toddlers, staff can provide parents with a chart describing the child’s day (meals, diapering, sleep)
- Staff, are also available during pick-up times to offer a brief reflection of the events in the child’s day.

#### **Monthly Newsletters:**

- Monthly newsletters are posted at the beginning of each month. These newsletters provide the families with important news from their child’s room, the office and upcoming events.



## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Parent/Guardians are invited to make an appointment with the Supervisor who will explain the program and answer any questions.

A tour of the Centre is conducted so you can meet the staff, observe their interactions with the children and view the facilities.

You will then be placed on the waiting list and the Supervisor will contact you when a space becomes available.

Once a space is available, a parent will receive the application forms. All forms must be completed and/or read and signed. These forms are renewed annually based upon the calendar year.

### Waiting List Policy

When a parent is interested in putting their child at the center and there is no spot available or the child is not of age yet, the parent(s) can put their name on the waiting list. There is no fee for the waiting list and the parent(s) will be called when a spot is becoming available.

The first and last name of the child, parent's name and phone number will be placed on the waiting list and the order will be chosen based on a first-come-first-served basis.

### Withdrawal Policy

A family should give at least **one full calendar months** written notice to the Supervisor for the withdrawal of the child(ren). The initial deposit fee paid at the time of registration will be used as the last month's fee. The Supervisor will return all remaining cheques to the parent/guardian at that time.

***Please Note:*** *There is no guarantee for your child's placement if you choose to withdraw for any part of the year.*

The center reserves the right to withdraw a family from our center if they do not follow the policies outlined in this manual.

### Arrival and Pick-up Times

Regular times of drop-off and pick-up are a comfort to young children. Please try to arrive at the Centre by 11:00 a.m. so that your child can participate in all our programmed activities. Some days however we may request an earlier drop-off because of special activities. Your cooperation is appreciated in these matters and you will be given ample notice time.



It is important that you take your child(ren) directly into their classroom and let a staff member know that he/she has arrived, likewise, at pick-up time, let a staff member know that you are taking your child.

Parents are encouraged to drop off and pick up their child(ren) in a timely manner (i.e. within 10 to 15 minutes upon arrival).

Please call the center as early as possible if:

- your child will not be attending that day
- your child will be arriving late (for example, past 10:00 A.M.)
- you will be picking up your child early
- someone other than a parent will be collecting your child

Please note that staff may not be able to answer the phone but messages are checked in a timely fashion and phone calls are returned.

**Please note that children will only be released to their parent(s) / guardian(s) or a person listed as an authorized pick-up on the child's registration.** In the event anyone other than the above-mentioned parties will picking up your child, formal notice must be given to the Center providing the staff with the person's full name. The staff will be requesting a piece of formal photo identification from that person upon their arrival.

Please inform Apple Blossoms Center of any individuals that are NOT allowed to visit with the child or allowed to pick the child up, whether due to legal issues or other restraining orders.

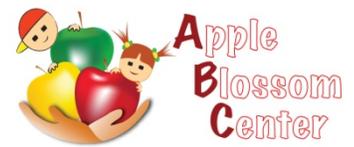
### **Late Pick-up Policy**

The Centre closes at 6:30pm. If you expect to be late, please call us as soon as possible.

Late charges are \$1.00 for every minute late.

Late fines are recorded, signed by you and paid directly to the staff member who stayed with your child. If payment is not received by the end of the month, you will be billed by the center.

If you are late three times, you will receive a written warning. If you are late a fourth time, you will be asked to withdraw your child(ren), as our hours are not meeting your needs. If your child has not been picked up by 7:00pm and any attempts to reach either the parent or an emergency contact have failed, the centre is required by law to contact the Children's Aid Society.



## FEES

### Registration Fee

There is a one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$100 due upon registration.

### Deposit Policy

A deposit equal to one month's fee is required to be paid for all children, at the time of enrollment. This one-month fee deposit is retained by the Centre and applied to the last month's fees provided 30 days written notice prior to withdrawal is given. It is forfeited if less than 30 days written notice is given. If the fees are increased, the last month's fee deposit will be adjusted at the time of the increase.

### Full Time Programs

Program	Toddler	Preschool	Montessori
	\$1400	\$1250	\$1400
<b>Kindergarten &amp; School Age</b>			
Afterschool every day		\$470	
Morning program and Drop Off		\$130	
PA days extra		\$30/day	

### Short Day Programs

*Montessori is only offered full time*

	Toddler	Preschool
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 pm Mon - Friday	\$1100	\$1000

Children not registered throughout the school year can register for PA days/March Break/ Winter Break at the cost of \$55 per day.

A one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$100 will be charged when registering. To secure a future spot, last month deposit required. If a parent cancels their child's registration up to 1 month prior to start date, 100% of the deposit will be refunded. If the cancellation is between 4 and 2 week prior, 50% of the deposit will be refunded. No refund will be made if the cancellation is less than 2 weeks notice.

*\*\*families with more than one child enrolled at the same time will receive a 5% discount on the lowest fee.*

### Fee Payments

Fees are due by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of every month. Parents/Guardians submit post-dated cheques for a half calendar year or the remainder thereof. Each cheque is to be made out for one monthly fee. Fees are not to be paid in cash.



### **Non-Sufficient Funds/Late Payments**

A non-sufficient funds (NSF) cheque is one that is rejected by the payer's bank. The parent(s) will be notified in writing if a NSF cheque has been submitted or a late payment has occurred.

Apple Blossoms charges an administrative fee of \$45 for NSF cheques and late payments. This fee is to be paid with the missed cheque/late payment. A NSF cheque or missed payment is to be replaced immediately. If the balance has not been paid by the 20<sup>th</sup> of a month, a second written notice will be given to the parent(s) warning them of possible consequences.

Late payment occurs if the daycare fee is paid after the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month the payment is for. A late fee charge of \$10 for payments rendered between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month. An additional \$5 per day will be charged for any payment made as of the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the payment month.

If a regular payment is missed or a NSF cheque is submitted while a balance for daycare fees from the previous month is still outstanding, Apple Blossoms reserves the right to suspend all child care until all fees are paid in full.

Written notice will be given to parents/guardians who have submitted two NSF cheques or paid late within a 11-month period warning them of possible consequences. If three late payments occur or three NSF cheques are submitted within a period of 12 months, the parent(s) will be asked to withdraw their child(ren) immediately.

### **Vacation /Sick Days**

If your family is away for holidays or miss days due to illness, Apple Blossoms does not reimburse for these days. Full payment for the month is still in effect (please see Fees).

### **Receipts**

Income tax receipts are in February for the previous calendar year.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

In accordance with the Child Care Early Years Act and the Ministry of Health, every effort is made to provide a safe and healthy environment for the children and staff.

### **Sleep Supervision**

All children enrolled in our toddler and preschool programs are provided with a daily 2 hour rest period. Each child is assigned an individual cot labelled. The center will provide a cot sheet and the parents are responsible for providing a blanket at their discretion. All sheets will be removed weekly for laundering and the cots will be disinfected before new cot sheets are placed. Parents are responsible for laundering their individual child's blankets.

### **Consultation with Parents**

At the time of enrolment, and any other appropriate time, the staff will discuss with the parents their child's sleep preferences, required accommodations, precautions, etc. For example, if a child sleeps with a toy at home, they can bring the toy to the center to use during naptime provided it does not pose a hazard. When a new staff is in the classroom, it is the responsibility of the other staff in the room to let them know each child's sleep preferences.

If a child's sleep behaviour or pattern changes, the staff will make sure to write it in the classroom communication book and communicate the change with the parents in person or by phone. If adjustments during nap are needed based on the change in a child's sleep patterns, the staff will make sure to make the necessary changes to the classroom.

### **Direct Visual Checks**

During the rest period, staff will conduct and document direct visual checks of children every 30 minutes. The sleep area will have sufficient lighting so that staff are able to visually see each child. Staff are to physically move themselves around the room and observe each child. Staff are to be checking for any indicators of distress or unusual behaviors for that child. Any significant changes in a child's sleeping patterns/behaviours during sleep will be documented and communicated to parents. When required and agreed upon with the parent, adjustments to the manner in which the child is supervised during sleep will be documented and implemented. Staff are to use the Sleep Supervision chart provided with this policy. All documentation will be filed and kept for three years from the date of making.

### **Nutrition**

Apple Blossoms provides a nutritious lunch as well as morning and afternoon snack through the use of a caterer. The catering company undergoes strict public health regulations and their menu is designed with a nutrition specialist and all food items are geared towards a well-balanced, low-sugar and low-fat diet to ensure that all children receive 2/3 of their nutritional requirements.

Alternate menu items are provided for children with allergies or dietary restrictions. Please let us know, in writing, if your child has any food restrictions/allergies.

Weekly menus are posted in the kitchen and on the Parent/Guardian Information Board. Copies of the weekly menus are also available to take home.

### **Food Policy**

In accordance with guidelines and regulations set forth by the Ministry of Education, and Public Health, Apple Blossoms Center does not allow outside food within the center. If a child needs to bring their own



food for dietary or personal reasons, a note written and signed by the parent(s) is needed explaining the reason and giving the center permission to give the child that food.

For special occasions (birthdays, holidays) the center will provide your child with a small birthday party that includes cupcakes/ cake made within the center. If you wish to bring in special treats for a holiday (Valentines, Christmas, Easter etc), they must be individually wrapped for each child and given to the staff to distribute to the children's parents at the end of that day. Do not place any food items etc in any child's cubby. This is very important in regards to children's allergies!

### **Allergies/Anaphylaxis Policy**

Please inform the center if your child has any known allergies and a complete list of all possible reactions so that we can accommodate your child's allergies. Apple Blossoms is committed to taking a pro-active role regarding the prevention of anaphylaxis. "Anaphylactic" means a severe systemic allergic reaction resulting in circulatory collapse or shock that can be fatal.

### **Strategy to Reduce Risk of Exposure**

1. Apple Blossoms Center is a **nut free** child care centre.
2. All parents, staff and volunteers are informed of this policy prior to employment or enrolment at the centre. A list of allergies and suggestions for snacks will be handed out at orientation of new families into the centre.
3. Parents of anaphylactic children will provide the centre with one set of medication to be stored in our First Aid Kit for that child's room.
4. All foods used for snacks, sensory activity, cooking activity, arts and crafts are **peanut/nut free** and do not contain traces of nuts.
5. Staff purchasing food or products for the centre will read food ingredient labels every time they purchase a product.
6. Children with extreme allergies that the centre cannot accommodate, parents/guardians will be asked to bring their own snacks from home.
7. Lists of children's allergies are reviewed regularly and an updated list of children's allergies is posted in each room and in the centre's office.

All teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR and additional training on how to administer an Epi-Pen, and the signs and symptoms to look for when a child goes into an anaphylactic shock.

### **Weather**

Apple Blossoms Center will remain open, but if the decision to close the Center early is made due to severe weather conditions, the parent(s) / guardian(s) will be notified so that arrangements can be made to have their child picked up.



If the Parent / guardian wish to arrange for their child's pick-up due to inclement weather, then it is the parent/guardian responsibility to notify the center of their intentions.

### **Emergency Procedures.**

The center follows the Fire Code and the CCEYA and conducts regular monthly fire drills to ensure the children and staff know the procedures for evacuating the building in a safe and timely manner in the event of an emergency. The Center also has detailed Emergency Evacuation policies and procedures in the event they arise. In the Event of an emergency that requires evacuation or closure of the center, the parents will be notified by phone calls, email and/or through the center app See Saw.

## **ILLNESS POLICY**

If a child attending the centre begins to display any of the symptoms listed below, he/she will be isolated from the other children and the parent or emergency contact will be called by the Supervisor or program staff.

If your child becomes ill while at home, please call the center to inform them that your child will be absent and state not only that they are ill but what their symptoms are. This will greatly assist the staff in informing other parents and detecting this same illness in other children.

### **Symptoms requiring a child to be removed from the program:**

- fever (38°F or 100°C, especially if temperature remains persistently high)
- diarrhea (2 episodes in one day)
- vomiting
- undiagnosed rash
- communicable diseases
- obviously infected discharge (thick and colored i.e. green)
- lethargy and irritability
- persistent pain
- cough (frequent bouts of 3 to 5 times per hour, especially if choking or vomiting)
- head lice or nits

If your child is sent home with any of these symptoms, they must remain at home the following day until there are no symptoms for a 24-hour period. In a case of an outbreak (when more than 5 children display the same symptoms on a short span of time), parents will be asked to keep their children home for 48



hours. The center will inform parents of any cases of illnesses and if there is an outbreak. **Your child will not be permitted to return during the 'wait period' even with a doctor's note.**

It is imperative that the parents accept the responsibility of updating the Center with any changes regarding their child's medical situation. Any changes, such as recent Reactions and Allergies, recent immunizations, and / or after a serious illness the Center must be notified.

Apple Blossoms Center staff will only administer prescription medication only. The medication must be in the original container and clearly labeled with the names of the child, prescribing doctor and medication. The label must also include the dosage amounts and times.

***Please note, no over-the-counter medications will be administered without a doctor's note containing the child's name, name of the medication, the dosage and times required. There are no exceptions.***

When a parent brings a prescribed medication into the Centre for their child, the following procedure is to be followed:

- The parent must complete and sign a daily consent form describing when and how the medication is to be administered.
- The staff member must ensure that the information on the daily consent form corresponds to that on the pharmacist's label and/or doctor's letter, i.e. correct date and name of child as well as storage.
- The RECEs in each classroom are the designated staff member(s) and must be assigned to administer the prescribed medication and this person(s) must sign the daily consent form after administering any medication.
- A second staff member must witness and confirm that that the correct medication and dosage is being given to the correct child and sign as the witness on the medication form.
- Any unused medication and/or empty containers following completion of medication are to be returned to the parent at the end of the day.
- All completed medication forms are to be returned to the office to be placed in the child's file

#### Recurrent Prescribed Medication

With regards to the use of medication that is needed on a regular basis, (e.g. Ventolin) or emergency medications (e.g. Epi-Pen) the following procedure must be followed:

- The staff administering the prescribed medication must receive training by an appropriate person in proper technique and use and when are the appropriate times to administer this prescribed medication.
- Staff and supervisor are to routinely check the medication to ensure that it is not expired. One month in advance of expiring, staff is to ask parents to bring in a renewed prescription.

- The parent must sign a general consent form for its administration that must be renewed whenever there is a change in the prescription.
- If the medication is to be administered on an “as needed” basis, written instructions must clearly indicate the situations under which the medication should be given (Ex. Physical symptoms on child, such as a rash).
- Each time the medication is given to a child, the staff must fill out the medication administration form with the date and time.

All Staff, Students and Volunteers shall review and sign this policy prior to employment and then annually afterwards or after any amendments to this policy.

### **PROHIBITED PRACTICES**

As early childhood professionals, part of our staff’s goals is to assist children in their program-solving and conflict resolution skills. Part of this is role-modeling appropriate skills and behavior while guiding children’s as well as the use of logical consequences to one’s actions. Apple Blossoms staff must follow these practices guidelines and parents are expected to also follow these principals while they are within our center. Everyone at the center has a “duty to report” any suspected case of child abuse. The individual who suspects that a child may have been abused or is at risk for abuse must report directly to the Children’s Aid Society, and cannot rely on any other individual to report on his/her behalf. Any additional allegations, suspicions and/or related information must be reported, even if previous reports with respect to the same child have already been made to the Children’s Aid Society.

#### **When dealing with a conflict/problem all staff are prohibited from:**

- Corporal punishment of the child;
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- Locking the exits of the child care center or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee’s emergency management policies and procedures;
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

**Permitted practices that staff are to use:**

- Related to the nature of the troublesome behavior (logical consequences)
- Appropriate to the development level of the child;
- Used in a positive and consistent manner;
- Designed to assist the child to learn appropriate behaviour;
- Implemented as soon as possible after troublesome behaviour; and
- Discussed with staff first and then the Supervisor if a difficult situation arises with a child.

In extreme cases of behavioral difficulties whereby a child is endangering his/herself or others, staff may find they need to respond to this crisis situation using physical guidance as a method to defuse and/or de-escalate a volatile situation. This physical guidance may only be used when there is imminent danger of compromising the safety of themselves or others. If the volatile behaviour continues, outside support may be brought in.

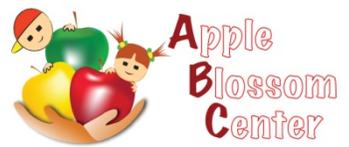
When all possible options are explored and the behavior continues, Apple Blossoms reserves the right to withdraw a child from the program within a 2-week period. The staff will try their best to assist the family in finding a suitable program

**SUPERVISION OF STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS**

Apple Blossoms Center welcomes students and volunteers to our center providing that the following policies and guidelines are followed

A student is defined as an individual currently enrolled in either a recognized college/university ECE program who is currently completing an academic required for school purposes. A volunteer is defined as an individual over the age of 15 who are willing to donate their time and assist staff and learn more about caring for children in our care.

Apple Blossoms Center will provide students and volunteers with a supportive and caring environment in which they can feel comfortable volunteering or conduct their academic placements. There is only one (1) student and one (1) volunteer allowed per room at one time. The RECE or a designated ECE in a given room will be responsible for guiding and assisting them in learning about caring for children as well as the day to day running of a program.



Students and volunteers are to never be considered part of our ratio requirements as set out in the CCEYA and are to never be left unattended with the children including supervision during washroom times and diaper changing.

All students/volunteers must be trained on all Anaphylaxis and Medical needs within our center and review the corresponding policies. They will also review other center policies before they commence their student placement or volunteering and must do so annually thereafter.

Volunteers and students must provide a current Vulnerable Sector Screening before they commence. Students from a college/university must provide their school documents prior to commencing.

Apple Blossoms reserves the right to deny students/volunteers access to the center for any infraction of the policies and guidelines set out in this policy.

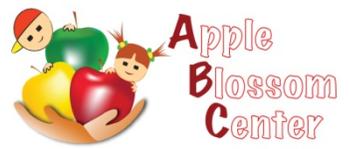
### **Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure**

This policy is to set out the procedures for how the Supervisor, staff and parents are to deal with issues and concerns that arise at Apple Blossoms Center. When a parent has an issue/concern that regards their child, they are to bring it forth to their child's educators at a time that the educators are free to speak without other children/families around. This can be done through a scheduled time to ensure that they have the educator's full attention. This meeting should be set within a 24 hour time-frame. The educator and parent are to either resolve the issue/concern immediately or put into action a plan of resolution which will include a time-line and a scheduled time to review the plans success. If a parent does not feel comfortable bringing the issue forth to the educators, they can inform management through a scheduled meeting.

The educator(s) are to keep management informed of the situation and in the event that the educator and parent are unable to come to a resolution or plan-of-action, management will then step in and work through the resolution process with the parent.

If an issue/concern can be resolved right away with the parent, the staff/management will resolve the issue **within 24 hours** of the complaint. If an issue/concern needs to be discussed further, the issue will be resolved **within 1 week** (5 business days) AFTER the meeting with parents.

All documentation regarding the issue/concern and respective plan of action/resolution will be kept in the child's file.



## PROGRAM STATEMENT

Apple Blossoms Center is committed to providing our families and their children with a program that provides positive outcomes relating to the children's learning and well-being while in our care. In order to achieve this, the center applies the How Does Learning Happen (HDLH) document as our guide enabling our qualified staff to put into practice the wealth of knowledge from research and theory into practice. Apple Blossoms Center is proud of the work we do and the services we provide and is respectful of the trust invested in us. To ensure that Apple Blossoms Center remains current with the latest research and understanding of how children learn, our programs, policies and program statement will be reviewed annually by management and all staff.

### **Foundations of learning**

At Apple Blossoms Center our programs are designed based upon the four foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression. These concepts guide our educators to strive to provide the best experiences and outcomes for children, families and educators. These foundations are a vision for all children's future potential and a view of what they ought to experience each day. All children deserve an environment that views them as competent, capable, curious and full of potential regardless of age, ability, gender, language or cultural background. Our goal is to ensure that all children have a sense of belonging, are valuable contributors in their daily learning and achieve success.

### **How learning happens at Apple Blossoms Center.**

Our programs employ the pedagogy outlined within the HDLH document while implementing our programs. Pedagogy is the understanding of how learning happens and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning. Employing the HDLH pedagogical approach, Apple Blossoms Center provides a center that enables children to establish positive, responsive adult-child relationships, provides an inclusive learning environment that encourages exploration, play, and inquiry while engaging children and their families as co-learners. Our center also sets up the rooms as a third teacher in that the environment enables children to explore and learn independently. Apple Blossoms strives to achieve a reflective and collaborative practice by continuously examining, reflecting and collaborating on our daily practices and programming, on why we are implementing our practices and how they impact children and their families.

Curriculum is the content of that learning both shaped by views about children, the role of educators and families and the relationships among them. The curriculum designed by the staff is based upon children's interests and developmental components outlined through Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) documentation. Apple Blossoms Center employs two types of programming: Emergent and Montessori.



The content of both programs is based upon children's interests and developmental needs and incorporates both teacher-directed instruction and self-exploration learning opportunities. Children's interests and developmental needs are determined through regularly documented observations of the children. These teacher-written observations are based on the children's discussions with peers and teachers, the program areas they chose to play within and how they use the items/toys. Children's social interactions and development in all areas are also noted by educators for determining the direction of their curriculum. These observations will be applied to explore how children view and interact with their world, form their relationships and each child's developmental needs. The staff also use developmental assessments of the children to ascertain children's programming needs.

ABC recognizes that children not only learn from the teachers and activities, they also learn directly from their interactions in their environments. Therefore, following the pedagogy of a positive learning environment, the rooms are designed to allow the environment to become a third -teacher and to promote independent exploration and learning. The rooms are equipped with age-appropriate materials in all learning areas on open shelving providing ease of access and choice. The rooms are kept neat and orderly and free of clutter yet allows for children to freely explore. There are areas for large and small group activities while allowing for solitary play and quiet areas for children. Educators encourage children's engagement in their surroundings through a curriculum that promotes involvement in experiences in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry. The children will be provided with a variety of learning materials in an open-concept, environment enabling them to explore materials of interest to them within a safe and meaningful manner. The educators' role is not to lead the activity but to enhance a child's learning through questions, discussions and suggestions presented to the child. During group learning activities, educators present a concept in various ways (discussion, materials, observations) to the children and then follow the children's lead in what aspects of that concept they are interested in learning. This programming requires that staff approach their curriculum with a desired learning process as opposed to a desired learning outcome. This entails following both the Emergent and Montessori methods of learning.

Apple Blossoms Center develops a sense of belonging by providing an environment that facilitates and guides positive connections with the children, their respective families and our community. This is achieved by providing a program that is supportive and responsive to interactions among children, parents and educators. To achieve a sense of belonging, Apple Blossoms Center recognizes that it is situated in a community enriched with the Mandarin language and has developed a Mandarin program whereby children learn the language and culture while also enabling those who do not speak English the ability to learn English. This enables all children and families to develop a sense of belonging, within not only the



center, but also the surrounding community. The staff also fosters the engagement of ongoing communication with parents by ensuring they routinely and warmly acknowledge the parents during drop off and pick up times, allowing for open discussions with the parents, daily charts indicating their child's daily activities, accommodating parent requests to their best abilities and are available for meetings regarding children's developmental needs. Parents are also informed through our bulletin boards that contains pertinent center information, programming for each room, pedagogical documentations as well as the use of the app See Saw whereby staff keep parents informed through messages and postings.

Apple Blossoms Center also establishes a sense of belonging to the community through involving local community partners such as York Year District School Board, York Region Public Health, York Region Police and Fire Department, and local businesses. Involvement with these community partners take form through either connecting families to their services or involving them in our programming through presentations and workshops.

In line with the HDLH pedagogy, the center strives to support children in their growing sense of self and their well-being, physically, emotionally and socially. In ensuring that a child's well-being is being met, ABC provides a daily program that includes physical activity both indoors and outdoors, nutritious meals, rest periods, as well as time for quiet learning to ensure that all needs are being met. The center also endorses Public Health requirements regarding infection control and food safety. Children are taught and encouraged to routinely wash hands properly to prevent the spread of infection. Staff routinely remove soiled items and follow a toy washing and laundry schedule while also ensuring that their rooms are sanitized according to Public Health regulations. In the event of illnesses, staff employ the outbreak procedure and suspend sensory play. To ensure the safety of all children, staff always position themselves in the rooms or outdoors whereby they have a good view of all children and conduct regular checks of the room to ensure the environment and all equipment is safe. In the event of any accident, the child will be attended to and appropriate treatment will be applied and documented for parents and the child's file. Management will review accident reports and determine if there are means to reduce injuries to children. Children's individual needs will be met during all parts of our program to our best abilities and will be discussed with the parents and staff.

At Apple Blossoms Center we are dedicated to the development of healthy children. We strongly believe in providing healthy food choice so children gain healthy eating habits. Our menus rotate on a 4- week schedule and cover all four food groups in the Canada Food Guide. All our programs provide a morning snack, a hot lunch, and an afternoon snack to all the children who attend. The before and after school program also follow the nutritional framework and are provided with a morning and afternoon snack, and



a hot lunch on PA Day and winter/March Break. All meals are prepped in our kitchen by a qualified staff with a current Food and Handling Certificate. All meals provided by the licensed caterer are checked upon delivery and before serving for healthy temperatures. Staff will also incorporate learning about healthy lifestyles and habits into their programming and use meal times as one means to encourage healthy habits.

The center also incorporates regular one-hour outdoor play times each morning and afternoon to encourage physical activities. Staff program activities that are interesting, safe and fun for the children to participate in either in large or small groups or individually. Whereby there is inclement weather, the staff will engage the children in physical play within the rooms. All activities are adapted to ensure that all children are able to participate regardless of abilities.

Furthering our commitment to the HDLH pedagogy and the well-being of children, all staff encourage children's freedom of expression and ability to self-regulate their emotions and consequential behaviors. This is done through positive guidance and self-regulation outlined in our behavior management guidelines as well as through role-modeling by all staff. In order to enhance a child's ability to self-regulate, educators will not only role-model positive communications, they will employ all learning opportunities to guide and assist children to communicate and behave in ways to achieve positive outcomes. Staff will also include the parent/guardians via support, communication and resources to enable parents/guardians to support their child's ability to self-regulate.

### **Implementation of program statement**

All our educators, students and volunteers are trained to ensure our program statement is being implemented and carried out daily.

ABC management recognizes that our work with children is continuously developing and is thereby committed to providing staff with the opportunities to continuously learn and develop as well. This is done by providing current relevant documentation, opportunities to participate in learning workshops, professional presentations, and regular staff meetings. Management also encourages and supports the RECE's development and implementation of their continuous professional learning with the College of Early Childhood Educators.

ABC management will also review the impact of their program and approaches on children and families by parent surveys, reviewing children's assessments, staff accident reports, and continuous feedback from staff and families. ABC management will also review all program plans as well as documentation to confirm



they meet the pedagogical approach. Management will also demonstrate pedagogical leadership by observing each class's daily routine, environment and engaging in conversations with the educators and children regarding children's learning and what is the best tactic of learning to apply.

These reviews will then be compared to this program statement to ensure that it is still reflective and current to the children's, families, community and staff needs and expectations.