



Parent Handbook

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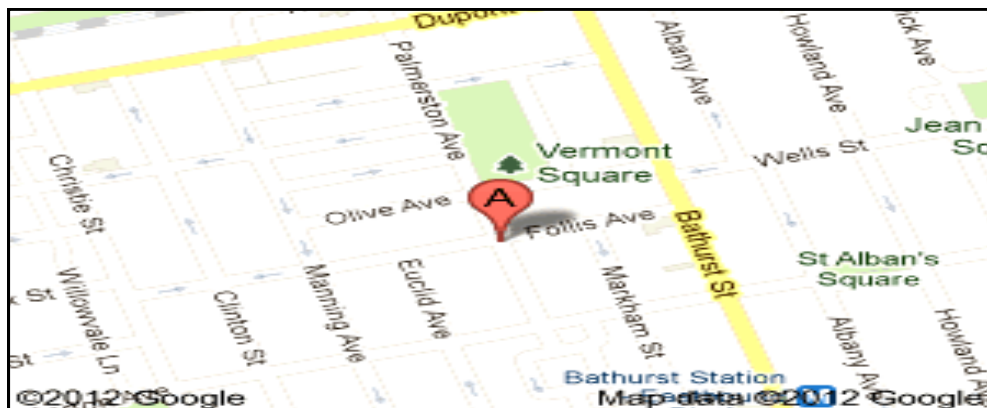
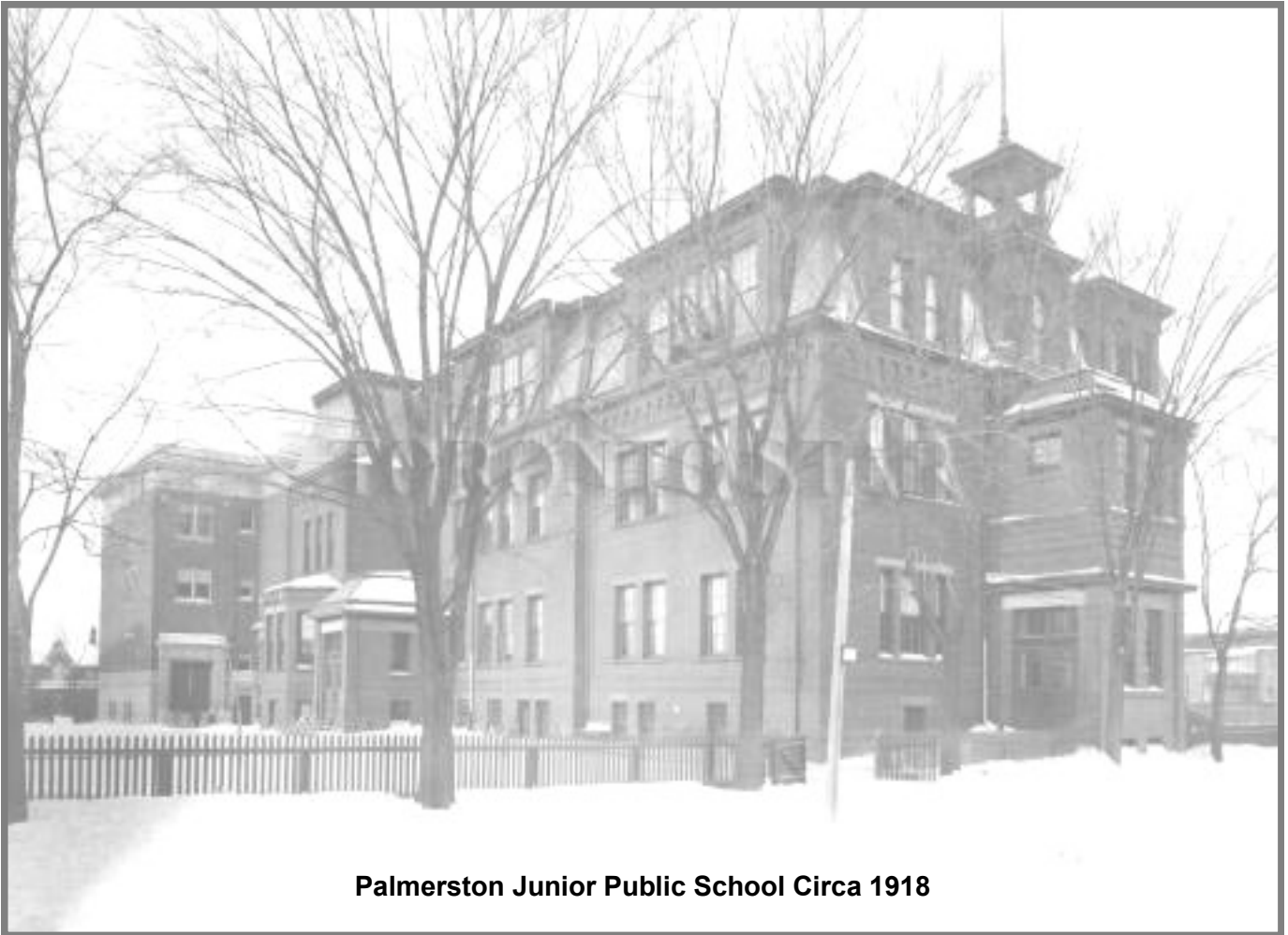


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Palmerston Junior Public School Circa 1918

WELCOME

This handbook is meant to provide basic information on the services of Palmerston Community Daycare Centre (PCDC). We encourage parents to communicate with the administrative staff and frontline staff, especially their child's teachers on a regular basis and any time they have questions. Parents are welcome to attend the monthly board meetings, during which childcare is always available by request. PCDC's Annual General Meeting is held each May and parents are encouraged to attend. It is our goal to provide the families, children, staff, students and community members of Palmerston Community Daycare with the best service available.

Palmerston Community Daycare is located in the Annex building, situated on the grounds of Palmerston Ave. Jr. School. The daycare office is located on the third floor and parents/guardians are welcome to drop in for a visit anytime.

Comments or opinions are always welcome in person, by email or may be placed in the suggestion box located on the 2nd floor outside room 27.



HISTORY

Palmerston Community Daycare was established on September 10, 1980 and officially opened in November 1980. Six families got together and decided to create a very special place for their children. The day care was run as a collective and co-operative venture with parents, 18 children, four teachers and a cook. The Rabbit Room was the play room, the Rainbow Room was the sleep room and the School Age Room was the dining room and office. Food was prepared in the kitchen in the main school building.

Palmerston School became a French Immersion School in 1981 and in 1982 the enrolment at the day care was increased to 32 preschoolers. A school-age program was started for children up to 10 years of age. When the kindergarten-aged children began school for a half day it was decided that a nursery program would be opened enabling children to use the daycare facilities from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

In July 1994 a program was created to accommodate children between the ages of 10 and 12. This program had a recreational focus geared towards the needs of older children.

Parents and guardians have always played a key role in the daycare, from the early days when a parent kept the financial records and others did the cleaning and laundry. Parents/guardians have come in and shared their talents, interests and cultures with children and staff, thereby continuing to help PCDC remain an integral and community-oriented centre.

Staff consist of trained professionals, Registered Early Childhood Educators, (RECE) and Early Childhood Assistants (ECA).

Today the daycare is run by a Board of Directors that consists of as little as 10 or as many as 15 parent/community members. PCDC is still a parent/guardian and staff-managed daycare. Parent/guardian ideas and input are vital in the smooth functioning of the centre.

PALMERSTON COMMUNITY DAYCARE CENTRE PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM STATEMENT

(document summary for parents and caregivers)

How Does Learning Happen (HDLH) is a professional learning resource that provides a common framework to help childcare centres focus on knowledge from research, theory and practice on what is most important for children.

It encompasses a broad range of program philosophies and approaches, and reflects the view of children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

The HDLH program statement describes the goals that guide PCDC's programs for the children and the approaches that will be implemented in the program to meet these goals.

The program statement tells families, educators and others what our childcare centre is striving to achieve (*goal*) and what actions are going to be put in place to achieve these goals (*approach*). The program statement is a document that will continue to evolve with the program as our learning and understanding expands, our processes change and our families, educators and children change.

See <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf> for more information.

PALMERSTON COMMUNITY DAYCARE CENTRE PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM STATEMENT

At Palmerston Community Daycare Centre (PCDC) our philosophy is to guide and support the growth of a child as an individual within a co-operative, child-centered environment. Children are viewed as competent, eager and active learners who benefit from a variety of experiences. These experiences provide opportunities for exploration, skill development and relationship building, all components which lead towards the discovery of their own identity.

PCDC promotes individual freedom within a structured framework, thereby providing the child with the opportunity to make choices, to respect themselves and the rights of others and to understand that their input into decision making is valued and respected.

Learning experiences are play-based and with the guidance of our experienced Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE's) and ECA staff, children engage in opportunities that stimulate communication, the development of social skills, and fine and gross motor development both indoors and outdoors.

In addition, self-esteem, decision-making capabilities, independence, natural curiosity and desire for learning is sparked.

A knowledge of, and sense of community is built through outings, social functions and exposure to various ethnic groups, cultures and religions.

PCDC promotes anti-biased behaviour in all aspects of its program. Children are encouraged to participate in all activities equally and in a non-violent manner. We support constructive problem-solving, both in interactions between children and between children and adults.

Our program encourages respect, regardless of gender, race, religion, class, age, sexual orientation, marital status, physical limitations, ethnic origin or citizenship.

Communication among staff, families, children and community partners is vital in creating and sustaining a warm, safe environment that allows the children of PCDC to grow and learn.

THE FOUNDATION OF PALMERSTON COMMUNITY DAYCARE CENTRE'S PROGRAM

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years is a pedagogical document that helps educators focus on the interrelationships between children, families and staff in an early years environment and is the foundation of PCDC's program.

To facilitate PCDC in achieving the principles of its philosophy and program statement PCDC follows the guidelines of Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (How Does Learning Happen?).

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/howlearninghappens.pdf>

PCDC recognizes that the four foundations of HDLH? (*refer to following paragraphs*) must be present in the program to allow the children to succeed and grow towards independence and self-identity.

Foundations, Goals for Children and Expectations for Programs:

- Belonging** – children develop a sense of belonging so that he/she feels connected to others and can contribute to their 'world'. PCDC will support and encourage the development of respectful relationships to help create a sense of belonging between the children, adults and community around them.
- Well-Being** - children develop a positive sense of self, self-care and self-regulation skills; and learn to recognize the importance of physical and mental health wellness. PCDC will provide learning opportunities for the development of habits of good health; nurture and support children's developing sense of self.
- Engagement** – children become active and engaged in the world around them by exploring with his/her senses, minds and bodies. PCDC will provide experiences to engage children's curiosity and exploration in meaningful learning and discovery.
- Expression** - as capable communicators, children learn to express themselves in a variety of ways. PCDC will provide opportunities for exploration of a variety of materials, support problem solving and decision making scenarios and developing emerging communication skills, and foster creativity,

In addition to the foundations of HDLH?, PCDC's curriculum also recognizes and utilizes the following guiding principles of **Early Learning for Every Child Today** (ELECT) in the development of its programs. Weekly programs reflect the *Continuum of Development*, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/continuum/> which "outlines the sequence of skills that children can be expected to acquire as they develop. It covers a broad range of developmental domains (physical, social, emotional, communication/language and cognitive). It is a base for observation and discussion of children's growth and learning in which staff observe, interpret and plan a curriculum based on interest and capabilities to share with families and caregivers."

- 1. Early child development sets the foundation for lifelong learning, behavior and health.** PCDC provides varied and stimulating day to day experiences to set the child on a path of lifelong learning; developing positive interactions with peers and adults and making healthy choices for mind and body.
- 2. Partnerships with families and communities strengthen the ability of early childhood settings to meet the needs of young children.** PCDC encourages and supports families' participation in their children's early learning environment and provides opportunities for regular communication and involvement.
- 3. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion are prerequisites for honouring children's rights, optimal development and learning.** PCDC recognizes its families' diverse cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds and provides learning opportunities and celebration of the diversities within the centre and community which then enrich the environment for all its members.

4. **A planned curriculum supports early learning.** PCDC's trained staff provide specific goals for children that support self-regulation, identity building, social interactions, development of language and cognition skills, fine and gross motor skills through observation of children's interests and capabilities.
5. **Play is a means to early learning that capitalizes on children's natural curiosity and exuberance.** PCDC recognizes that play is how children make sense of their world and provides programming that captures children's attention and challenges them with age appropriate experiences and opportunities that promote learning through play.
6. **Knowledgeable, responsive early childhood professionals are essential.** PCDC's experienced and qualified staff provide an environment that respects the diversity, uniqueness and capabilities of the children in its care. They participate in continuous professional learning, implement programming that is both challenging and play focused and maintain open and regular communication with parents and caregivers.

PALMERSTON COMMUNITY DAYCARE CENTRE'S GOALS AND APPROACHES

1. To promote health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children:

Health and Safety - PCDC is a childcare centre licensed under the Ministry of Education (MOE), and meets and exceeds all health and safety requirements of the MOE, Toronto Public Health and local bylaws.

- Health and Safety Policies and Procedures are in place and reviewed annually by staff. This information is available to families and caregivers through the Parent Handbook given out at time of registration and posted on our website.
- Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans, allergies and dietary restrictions are updated regularly, posted and reviewed by staff annually
- Health and Safety resources are posted in each of our rooms and links to Health and Safety resources are forwarded to families with the monthly calendar or through email correspondence.
- Notices of Communicable Disease outbreaks and protocol during outbreaks are posted as required.
- Staff conduct a daily physical assessment (DPA) of each child upon arrival to the centre. This involves a visual observation and follow up with a parent/caregiver if required.
- All children must be escorted into the centre by an adult and signed in and out with a staff member present. Identification must be presented to a staff member upon a first time pick up.

Nutrition and Well-being – PCDC strives to promote healthy eating habits and educating children on healthy food choices. We recognize the important link of healthy choices to the development of healthy minds and bodies.

- PCDC provides a nutritious lunch daily from M.Halpert Catering (halpertcatering.com)
- Menus are reviewed by a registered dietician and current menus posted.
- Snacks are prepared on site following Canada's Food Guide <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>
- Meals are culturally sensitive and accommodate allergies, dietary restrictions, preferences and religious food requirements.
- Staff role-model positive food choices and eating habits.
- Programming includes weekly cooking activities and children actively participate in the creation of snack once a week.
- Notice of food recalls received from cfiamaster@INSPECTION.GC.CA are passed on to staff and families when applicable.
- Children are provided with the opportunity to engage in daily physical activity, contributing to the development of healthy minds and bodies.
- Staff role-model by engaging in physical activity with the children.

2. To support positive relationships among children, families and staff:

PCDC recognizes the importance of creating a sense of belonging for children and families and the development of positive relationships begins before children are even enrolled at the centre. These relationships continue throughout the families stay at PCDC. The following are ways in which PCDC establishes and maintains relationships:

- Potential clients are provided with information and/or a tour. Upon confirmation of enrolment, orientation sessions are arranged between parent(s), child and staff.
- Each child is recognized as having equal rights in being an active participant at PCDC; the uniqueness of each child and family is respected and recognized, including gender, race, religion, class, age, sexual orientation, marital status, physical limitations, ethnic origin or citizenship.
- Programs are planned to support an inclusive learning environment and reflect capabilities, interests and differences.
- Children and their families are greeted daily upon arrival by name.
- Staff communicate with parents/guardians on a daily basis, sharing observations and reflections.
- Annual parent-teacher information exchange sessions are scheduled for the sharing of children's ages and stages of development in preparation for kindergarten.
- Arrangements are made for staff to meet with parents/guardians when required or requested.
- Children are provided with opportunities to develop personal responsibility, social skills, problem-solve by coming up with their own solutions, and respect peers and the adults in their environment.

3. To support positive self-expression, communication and self-regulation:

At PCDC children develop a sense of belonging within our inclusive environment.

- Regular Show and Share sessions encourage communication and the development of self-confidence by allowing children to bring in and describe an item of relevance in their world to peers and teachers.
- Children are provided with opportunities to articulate ideas, and communicate in group discussions, through artistic expression, the creation of newsletters, and through photo documentation.
- Small group transitions and experiences support the 'reluctant' child and provide opportunities for confidence building, identity development and more individualized teacher-child interactions.
- Self-regulation is supported by providing a safe and calming environment; allowing children to visit a 'quiet zone'; providing healthy food choices and opportunities to rest help a child to remain calm, alert, and ready to learn.

4. To foster play-based exploration and inquiry:

The play-based programming at PCDC provides opportunities for children to engage in experiences that stimulate communication, the development of social skills, and fine and gross motor skill development both indoors and outdoors.

- Programming is based on children's interests and recognizes the individuality of each child.
- Play is unique to the individual child and their decision of when, where, and how to play is based on their interests and curiosity.
- Materials are accessible and varied and reflect diversity, and a broad range of interests and abilities.
- Children are active participants in the program, involved in role-playing, experimenting with a variety of materials and objects, constructing and creating.
- Families and community partners are welcome to participate in our program, sharing skills, cultural traditions, and talents with the children.
- Play-based curriculum provides opportunity to explore, problem solve, inquire and engage in critical thinking.

5. To provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences to foster development:
At PCDC children are invited to participate actively in contributing to the program plan by sharing their ideas, interests and experiences with staff and peers.
- Staff observe and listen to the children and build upon their interests and capabilities.
 - Play is child directed and children are encouraged to explore their ideas in all areas of the program, both indoors and outdoors.
 - Play is enhanced by the staff by providing materials, objects, and resources to support the children's interests and learning experiences.
 - Open-ended materials and 'loose parts' are available to further encourage exploration and self-expression.
6. To provide opportunities for a range of experiences that support each child's learning and development: PCDC encourages and supports the growth of a child as an individual within a co-operative, child centered environment by -
- viewing children as unique, competent, eager and active learners who benefit from a variety of experiences.
 - providing opportunities for exploration, skill development and relationship building, all components which lead towards the discovery of their own identity.
 - providing curriculum based on the principles of ELECT; (*see previous paragraph for details on ELECT principles*).
 - regular communication between staff and the sharing of observations, ideas and experience for planning based on children's interests.
 - utilizing available resources such as the Resource Consultant assigned to PCDC to establish IPP's (individualized program plans) in consultation with parents.
7. To incorporate a range of indoor and outdoor play, active play, and quiet play experiences:
PCDC recognizes that active play is an important part in the development of healthy bodies and minds and that the outdoors is the best place for children to practice and master emerging physical skills. Children have the opportunity to:
- experience motor skills like running, leaping, and jumping, practice ball-handling skills, like throwing, and catching.
 - perform manipulative skills such as pushing a swing, pulling a wagon, and lifting and carrying movable objects.
 - develop cognitive and social/emotional skills through the invention of games and learn about the world in their own way.
 - feel safe and in control, which supports decision-making and organizational skills.
 - invent rules for games and develop an understanding of why rules are necessary and improve communication skills and vocabulary as they invent, modify, and enforce rules.
 - develop numeracy skills by keeping score and counting.
 - develop social skills by learning to play together and cooperate.
 - utilize all of their senses while engaged in the outdoor environment.

During inclement weather gross motor play is implemented in an alternate space such as a vacant classroom or hallway.

Opportunities for rest are available to provide a balance of active and quiet time activities. To facilitate the transition to rest or quiet time, PCDC provides books and puzzles, as well as soothing background music. Staff may read a quiet story and dim the lights. PCDC considers the individual needs of the children and requests by parents around rest time and where possible provides alternatives to remaining in a darkened sleep room.

8. To foster parent engagement and communication:

PCDC recognizes that parents know their children best and that the sharing of knowledge is vital to the success of their child. Supporting the value of 'parents as partners' PCDC provides opportunities for:

- parents and staff to meet through either formal or informal meetings, and encourages and supports conversation at drop off and pick up times.
- regular communication through its Parent Link program, in which a parent representative from each program sends out 1 or 2 emails per month to participating parents of a class, reminding them of, or outlining details of events for the month, i.e – celebrations, field trips, etc.
- parents to receive a photo of their child engaged in a particular activity during the month by email.
- parents to receive a monthly calendar highlighting upcoming events for the month, with accompanying newsletter summarizing the activities of the past month.
- parents to attend Board meetings and PCDC's Annual General Meeting and encourage parents to join the Board as a representative of their child's program.
- annual teacher-parent sessions for the sharing of and exchange of information about their child; arrangements are made for teachers and parents to meet any time they are requested or required.
- 1 or 2 workshops per year on topics of interest to parents.
- parents to provide feedback through online survey forums on a variety of topics, issues, or concerns.
- families to gather in a celebration of diversity and cultural holidays at its annual Festival of Lights event in December.
- a celebration of its Graduates by inviting families to attend the annual Graduation ceremony and start to summer BBQ in June.
- new and returning families to attend its annual end of summer, back to school Pizza Party. This event provides new families with an opportunity to meet the staff, children and other parents of PCDC for the first time.
- families to become involved in the planning of its annual Fallfest fundraiser and volunteer at the event which provides an environment where families socialize and meet their child's peers and other families in their community in a festive atmosphere.

9. To involve local community partners:

PCDC engages and involves local community partners in supporting its children, families and staff. The local community is usually the child's first experience of a broader world outside of the family home.

As a long-standing institution in the community, PCDC is recognized for its commitment to and support of the children, families and local community partners.

PCDC provides opportunities for:

- visits to the local Public Library to engage in planned and unplanned reading and learning opportunities.
- visits to the local grocery store to explore a variety of fruits, vegetables and other foods, promoting and encouraging discussion on healthy food habits and multicultural foods.
- participating in invitations from Palmerston Public school to attend assemblies, parades and other school events.
- volunteers and ECE students to engage in practical work experience and enhance the learning experiences already provided to the children.

10. To support staff in continuous professional learning:

- PCDC is an equal opportunity employer and aims to select the best qualified individual for each position in accordance with PCDC's Anti-Bias Policy.
- Staff can expect to be treated fairly and with respect.
- PCDC staff are committed and skilled professionals who recognize and understand the requirements necessary to support and facilitate children's development and growth.
- PCDC staff possess effective communication and inter-personal skills and are able to relate to both children and adults. They have developed proficient skills of observation and insight over sharing reflections with other staff and parents.
- PCDC supports and provides its staff with opportunities for professional development through field-related agencies, facilitators and in-house workshops.

- PCDC maintains membership with **Umbrella Central Daycare Services**, (<https://www.umbrelladaycare.com/>) an innovative, creative *organization* created to assist with setting up, administering, and offering quality programs for young children and providing professional development opportunities for educators and the **Ontario Coalition for Better Childcare**, (<http://www.childcareontario.org/>) an agency that advocates for affordable, high quality, not-for-profit child care in Ontario.
 - PCDC makes arrangements for staff to participate in webinars and online training opportunities.
 - PCDC's ECE's are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators (<https://www.college-ece.ca/enand>) are supported in their Continuous Professional Learning requirements.
11. To document and review the impact of the strategies outlined in the goals 1 through 10:
PCDC recognizes and supports the ideology that pedagogical documentation is an effective tool for staff to discover and record how children think and learn.
Staff make daily observations of the children to facilitate their future planning. Documentation provides an opportunity for:
- visually displaying children's learning experiences and development toward self-identity.
 - a snapshot summary of a child's 'world' and their role in it.
 - initiating dialogue with families about their child's daily learning experiences.
 - parents to add their own experiences about their child's learning.
 - children to be included in the planning process.
 - staff self-reflection as they continue to engage in professional learning.

*The purpose of observations and documentation is to "help to create a holistic picture of children's experiences, development and learning, and help to support planning that is meaningful to each child."

"Documentation is a tool to make children's learning visible. It can help practitioners gain greater insight into children's thinking throughout everyday experiences. It is also used to reflect children's thinking, to help them generate new ideas, learning, and discoveries. Documentation allows us to gather, share, and discuss evidence of development and learning with parents, children and other practitioners." <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/observation/>

PCDC provides written documentation, visual displays and photo documentation of children's learning experiences to parents as a means to gain insight into How Learning Happens at PCDC every day.

PCDC was established in 1980 and is recognized as playing an active role in the Annex neighborhood and being a vital service to the community for over 35 years. PCDC's professional and experienced educators and staff are recognized for their dedication and long-term commitment in making it a warm, safe and thriving 'home' for its children.

ANNUAL STAFF REVIEW OF PALMERSTON COMMUNITY DAYCARE'S PROGRAM STATEMENT:

PCDC management and staff will review the Program Statement annually to:

- ensure that PCDC's program statement reflects its philosophy; and ensure that as best practices change and evolve the program statement reflects any changes.
- ensure that program statement is consistent with actual practices.
- ensure that the program statement conforms to current requirements; and new information and updates in the field of Early Childhood Education are included.
- ensure that the language of the program statement is clear and understandable, and that staff members can utilize the program statement as a tool to guide them in the performance of their professional responsibilities.

LICENSING

Palmerston Community Day Care is licensed under the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Education.

On August 31, 2015, the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 \(CCEYA\)](#) came into effect. This new legislation replaces the previous *Day Nurseries Act*.

Information for parents/guardians may be found on the following website:
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/index.html>

ASSESSMENT FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

The *Assessment for Quality Improvement* or **AQI** prescribes clear expectations, service standards and guidelines for all child care providers who have a service contract with the City. It also serves as a self-evaluation and planning tool for child care operators, and educators. Parents should expect that a licensed child care centre will deliver a high quality program that allows children opportunities for play, socialization, exploration and developmentally appropriate learning in a safe and nurturing environment. The assessment measure uses the program, environment and interactions collaboratively to advance quality in child care.

Children's Services has introduced a new sticker that licensed child care operators who have been assessed for quality can display on their premises. The "Quality Makes a Difference" sticker is a public marker that informs parents which programs participate in the City's quality ratings. With over 600 programs assessed, this sticker advertises and demonstrates the City's commitment to high quality child care for families.

Further information may be found at: **toronto.ca/childcare**



PARENT LINK PROGRAM

Palmerston Community Daycare Centre launched its Parent Link program in February 2013 to provide parents with pertinent information in a timely manner via email communication. Parents are informed of upcoming events, i.e. – Fallfest, Festival of Lights, Staff Appreciation Day, program initiatives and opportunities for parent involvement on a regular basis.

Volunteer parent representatives for each of the programs act as a liaison between PCDC and the families of children in their respective classrooms. Email will be the mode of communication.

Parents/guardians interested in the parent link program will be asked to sign a form confirming participation and provide a current email address.

REGISTRATION CRITERIA

Each year the status of Palmerston Junior Public School is posted on the TDSB website. When the school is declared 'closed' for a particular school year, Palmerston Community Daycare will only register children who are in the Palmerston Junior Public School district.

If PCDC has vacant spaces and has exhausted its in-district waiting list, only then will children out of district to Palmerston Junior Public School be considered for enrolment. **Parents will be required to sign a letter confirming they understand that their child is out of district and may not be eligible for registration at Palmerston Jr. Public School.**

Placement for French Immersion is based on home address and only children residing **in district** will be eligible to attend Palmerston School's French Immersion Program, regardless if they are enrolled at Palmerston daycare.

See www.tdsb.on.ca for more information.

VACATION AND SICK DAYS

Parents/guardian are requested to call or email the daycare when a child is absent for any reason.

Parents/guardians of children attending school must also inform the school office if their child is absent. Good communication ensures that children are where they should be and safe at all times.

Parents/guardians are requested to notify the daycare, in writing, about vacation plans. This will assist us in staffing arrangements and program planning.

Fees are based on enrolment and are applicable when a child is absent due to illness or away on vacation.

FEES / ENROLLMENT

PCDC is a non-profit childcare centre and efforts are made to keep fees in line with other community childcare centres. Parents will be notified of any increases to fees with one month's notice. Fees include expenses for field trips, food and the day to day operational expenses. Child care fee subsidies are available to eligible clients. Please see toronto.ca/childcare for information.

A \$500.00 deposit is required upon confirmation of a child's spot at PCDC. This will secure the placement and be applied to the first month's fees. Deposits are non-refundable if less than 90 days notice of cancellation is provided prior to the confirmed start date. Previously submitted postdated cheques with dates later than 90 days from the date of written notice of intent to withdraw will be returned to the client. **See fee policy** included with your registration package.

Parents are required to provide a **minimum of four weeks notice in writing** when they withdraw their child from daycare. Fees are to be paid by a series of post-dated cheques for six months at a time, dated the first of each month.

There is no fee reduction for vacations or sick days. Parents are required to continue to pay regular fees to maintain their child's space when he/she is absent.

Nursery program fees are prorated to reflect that on PD days, school holidays and breaks, the Nursery program does not operate.

Parents/guardians will be notified if fees are in arrears. If fees are in arrears by two months or more, your child may be denied space in the day care and legal action may be taken.

PICK UP OF CHILDREN / SIGNING IN AND OUT PROCEDURES

The parent/guardian or alternate must sign the child(ren) in and out on the attendance register daily, recording the time of arrival and departure from PCDC. Any arrangements for the child to be picked up by someone other than the regular person(s) should be clearly noted on the attendance sheet and discussed in detail with staff verbally or per email. The pick up person will also be required to sign the child out on the attendance register.

Each child's file contains a list of adults who may pick up the child, as well as a list of emergency contacts in the case that parents/guardians cannot be reached. It is important that this list be kept current. Parents/guardians will be asked to fill out an information update form annually.

We remind parents of the importance in notifying the daycare of any changes in information pertaining to their child as it occurs.

No child will be allowed to leave PCDC with anyone other than those listed as designated pick up persons without prior notification of consent by a parent/guardian. **Anyone other than the parent picking up the child must be at least 16 years of age.**

Anyone picking up the child from PCDC for the first time, with parental consent, will be asked to provide identification.

HOURS

The day care operates from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The nursery program runs from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Friday from September to June, except on PD days, and school breaks.

LATE PICK-UP FINE

Parents/guardians and other designated pick up persons arriving after 6 p.m. are charged a late pick up fine. There is an initial fine of \$5.00 for any minute within the first five minutes after 6:00 p.m. and an additional \$1.00 for each minute thereafter when you are late picking up your child after 6:00 p.m. (e.g., if you arrive at 6:10 p.m. your late fee would be \$10.00). Recurring lateness (more than four times per year) will be reviewed by staff and the Board of Directors. The fine is paid to the staff member on duty. For Nursery School Families the fine as stated above applies for late pick up after 11:30 a.m.

STATUTORY HOLIDAYS and CLOSURES

PCDC is closed for the following statutory holidays:

**New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday
Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday
Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Day, Boxing Day**

PCDC's hours of operation may change on the following days:

**Christmas Eve Day, New Year's Eve Day
Easter Monday**

Parents/guardians are notified of the operating hours in advance and the hours of operation are posted for each holiday.

PCDC may be closed on other days around the winter holiday at the request of the School Board (i.e., social contract days) and at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Parents/guardians will be notified of unscheduled closures in advance.

Fees are based on enrolment and are applicable on all of the above noted days.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES

The Board of Directors, in conjunction with the Director, is responsible for the hiring and dismissing of staff, managing finances and addressing legal questions, determining fees and policy, direction and program content and organizing annual fundraising initiatives.

The Board is represented by members from the parent/guardian body and is composed of the following: **Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary**, 3 to 5 members from the preschool component, 3 to 5 members from the JK/SK component, 3 to 5 members from the school age component and 1 to 2 members from the nursery school component. Also sitting on the board is either the Principal or Vice Principal of Palmerston Public School, the Director, and Supervisor of PCDC and one staff representative.

The board meets once a month and once in either July or August. The Annual General Meeting is held in May when new Board members are elected.

All families of children at PCDC are encouraged to attend board meetings and to serve as members of the board. Voting is restricted to elected members of the board.

Standing committees include - Fundraising, Policy, Personnel, Finance and Safety and Governance.

Board members sit on these committees and membership is also open to the parent population. Ad hoc committees that address other issues as they arise, such as Catering, and Strategic Planning are formed when needed. All parents/guardians are welcome to participate on any committee of interest.

STAFF

PCDC is administered by a Director and Supervisor. The Director is hired by the Board of Directors and evaluated annually by the Personnel Committee Chair. The Director keeps the Board of Directors informed of the day to day operations through monthly reports at board meetings. The Supervisor assumes the responsibilities of the Director in his/her absence.

PCDC is an equal opportunity employer and aims to select the best qualified individual for each position in accordance with PCDC's Anti-Bias Policy.

PCDC's programs are staffed by RECE's and ECA's according to current room operating capacities. All staff are encouraged to participate in professional learning experiences. ECE staff must be registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE) and must maintain their membership while employed as an ECE. They are required to participate in the CECE's mandatory Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) opportunities.

See <https://www.college-ece.ca/en/Public/Parents> for more information on the CECE

A resource teacher is available to PCDC through Toronto Children's Services to act as a resource in meeting specific needs of children when required.

There are also screened volunteers, high school students and ECE college students (participating in their field placement requirements) present at various times throughout the year.

As per the Childcare Early Years Act, (CCEYA) section 7 – *Criminal Reference Checks, see appendix*, all staff, students and volunteers are required to undergo criminal reference checks. This includes vulnerable sector screening which must be updated every five years. Offence declarations must be provided every year that Vulnerable Sector Checks are not required.

All employees, students and volunteers must have a valid standard first aid certification including infant and child cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); see *CCEYA subsection 6.6 – Standard First Aid* and participate in annual re-certification.

All employees, students and volunteers will undergo a health assessment and immunization as recommended by the local medical officer of health before commencing work. See *CCEYA subsection 6.4 – Health Assessments and Immunization of Staff*

TDSB custodians are available on site. Duties include emptying childcare centre trash and green bin food containers, cleaning childcare centre floors, entrances and washrooms daily and responding to concerns of operational issues.

GROUPING:

PRESCHOOL - AGES 2.5 TO 3.8

The 2 preschool groups consists of a maximum of 16 children per group who are enrolled in either the Rabbit or Rainbow room. There are two qualified RECE teachers in each room, as well as an ECA from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. and from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. A catered hot lunch and a morning, afternoon and end of day snack are provided.

NURSERY - AGES 2.5 TO 3.8

PCDC offers a 5 morning/week nursery program from September to June, for two-and-a-half hours per day, integrated within the two preschool groups. Due to continued strong interest and parent request, PCDC retains this popular program each year. The nursery program operates from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Monday to Friday. A morning snack is provided. The program is closed during TDSB non-instructional days and during July and August.

JK/SK - AGES 3.9 TO 5.8

The JK/SK program is provided to children enrolled in Full Day Kindergarten at Palmerston Ave. Jr. Public school. Care includes before and after school care as well as a hot lunch program. Children are required to bring their own container with lid, eating utensils and water bottle daily. Childcare is provided during non-instructional days such as school PA days, March Break and the winter holiday. PCDC's Registered Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Assistants are responsible for planning and implementing the before and after school curriculum. The play-based program will be connected to learning that occurs during the school day and include opportunities for teacher-guided and independent activities, exploration, quiet times and outdoor play. Regular communication between TDSB and Palmerston Daycare staff is encouraged to support transitions and the seamless day philosophy. Parents will be required to complete an **Information Sharing Consent** form which supports communication among the professionals involved in your child's day to day educational and childcare experiences.

SCHOOL AGE - AGES 6 TO 12

The school age program has a maximum capacity of 60 children. Four qualified RECE teachers staff the program. The school age program begins at 7:30 a.m. as a combined supervised program. The children are supervised in their separate rooms during the lunch period from 11:40 a.m. to 12:40 p.m. and after school from 3:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. School age children receive a hot lunch and nutritious afternoon snack during the school year. During school holidays the school age children may be required to bring their own lunch, and parents/caregivers will be notified in advance. A morning, afternoon and end of day snack is provided during TDSB non-instructional days. Parents will be required to complete an **Information Sharing Consent** form which supports communication among the professionals involved in your child's day to day educational and childcare experiences.

SUMMER CAMP FOR CHILDREN 3.8 TO 5 YEARS OF AGE & 6 -12 YEARS OF AGE

During July and August PCDC's kindergarten and school age programs operate as a summer day camp Monday through Friday. The camp is also open to other children within the community subject to the availability of spaces. Parents of kindergarten and school age children enrolled at PCDC throughout the school year will have the option of purchasing weeks of camp during July and August. Children remaining at the daycare centre for the upcoming school year must be registered for a mandatory minimum of two weeks of camp to secure their childcare spots.

A mandatory 2 week registration of camp is required for parents of school age children requesting child care in the kindergarten or school age program for the following September to June school year.

HEALTH POLICY

In order to enrol in the daycare, each child is required to provide a doctor's report showing evidence of immunization and a physical examination.

Staff members are required to provide evidence of a medical exam, record of immunization and TB test upon commencement of employment.

Vigilance about health matters is critical in a daycare environment. The health of all the children depends on the co-operation of all parents/guardians and staff based on the current health standards.

Sending a sick child to daycare jeopardizes not only the child's health, but also that of the others in the day care. Children considered too ill to participate in all aspects of the program, including outside time, may not remain at the centre as staff are not available to provide individual care to the child. It is important therefore, that parents/guardians arrange for alternative care for their child/ren when they are sick.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep the daycare informed and up-to-date about any concerns they may have with respect to their child's health.

The following are some important health policies that will protect the child as well as the health of other members of the daycare:

- The parent/guardian is required to phone or email the centre when a child is absent due to illness.
- If staff considers a child too sick to be exposed to the other children, the child will be removed to a separate, supervised area and the parent/guardian will be notified.
- The staff will use their discretion concerning the seriousness of a cold. A parent/guardian will be asked to pick up their child when he/she has a severe cold (cough, running nose) and the child should return only when they are well.
- The parent/guardian of a child with a fever will be asked to be pick up him/her immediately.
- A child with a communicable disease will not be accepted into the centre without a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and can return to daycare.
- A child who is vomiting or has diarrhea will not be accepted into the centre for 24 hours after the illness has ceased.
- A child with an open wound or a rash that can be transmitted will not be accepted into the centre until the ailment has been treated and/or the child has a doctor's note stating that they are fit to return to daycare.

PCDC implements a lice check on the last Friday of each month in each of its programs. If a PCDC staff identifies head lice on a child they will notify the child's

parent/caregiver by phone or email. They will be advised of PCDC's lice policy and be required to treat the condition. Following treatment and before being re-admitted to the centre, staff will check the child for any further sign of lice.

PCDC follows all guidelines for common communicable diseases as outlined by Toronto Public Health.

If there is a confirmed case of a communicable illness, i.e. - strep throat, impetigo, pink eye, etc. in a classroom, a notice is posted on the classroom door to inform parents.

Any outbreak of a communicable disease is posted within the centre and reported to Toronto Public Health. TPH guidelines are posted in each classroom and copies are available to parents.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

All RECE's are qualified to administer basic first aid CPR. When an accident or injury occurs, staff are required to fill out an accident report documenting the details of the accident/injury. Parents/guardians are requested to review and sign the form which will then be placed in the child's file. A copy of the report will be given to the parent if requested.

In an emergency situation staff will follow appropriate emergency procedures and the child will be taken to the hospital. The parent/guardian or their emergency contact person will be notified as soon as possible and will be asked to meet the child and staff at the hospital. Staff is not permitted to drive children in their own vehicles. If a child must go to the hospital, either an ambulance or a taxi will be summoned.

In case of accident or illness, the staff will:

1. Respond immediately and calmly.
2. Comfort the child and stay with him/her.
3. Designate staff to call for help.

EMERGENCY SHELTER

In the case of an emergency where alternative shelter is required, PCDC's first option is to go to St. Albans Boys and Girls Club located at 843 Palmerston Ave. Staff will take with them all the pertinent information such as the children's files, emergency information, attendance records, daily logbook, the administering of medicine permission forms, medicine box and a supply of equipment needed for activities.

EVACUATION

In the event that the entire school needs to evacuate due to an emergency, the daycare will follow school guidelines and procedures detailed in the Emergency Evacuation Manual. The evacuation site is Essex Public School, located at 50 Essex Street.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICINE

Parents must fill out a **Permission to Administer Medication** form before any medication may be given to a child. Only RECE staff may administer prescription medication to a child. Prescription medicines will be given according to the labelled instructions on the bottle brought to the daycare.

Medication that is not doctor prescribed can only be administered when accompanied by a **Request for Administration of Non-Prescription Medication** form which must be completed and signed by a doctor. Either of these forms are available from PCDC staff.

All medicine **must** be in the original pharmacy bottle in order for it to be administered to children.

All medicine is kept in a locked box. Parents should inform staff whether the medication must be refrigerated or not.

No child shall be permitted to carry medicine on their person at any time. An exception to this ruling would be in the event that a child has a life threatening allergy and is required to carry a life saving Epi-Pen.

FIELD TRIPS

At PCDC we believe that community trips are an important part of our program. The preschool and JK/SK children may go on local outings throughout the school year. The JK/SK and school age children may go on trips on some PA days and during school holidays. In addition, weekly trips are planned during the summer months. Expenses such as TTC, chartered bus, admission fees, are included as part of our budget so there are no extra costs to parents. JK/SK children and School Age children are required to wear a PCDC T-shirt on all excursions away from the centre. These are available for purchase at a cost of \$10.00.

Parent volunteers are welcome to participate on all trips. All volunteers will be required to read PCDC's volunteer policy and sign an understanding of said policy. A lottery may be necessary at times when the volunteer response exceeds the requested ratio.

SEAT-BELT POLICY

When trips are taken on chartered buses PCDC will use buses without seat belts. PCDC has adopted a policy that indicates chartered buses without seatbelts pose less of a risk and are therefore the safer choice. 'School-aged children (18kg+ and 4 1/2yrs+) are safest for road travel in a school bus without seat belts. PCDC will continue to plan field trips for this population using a school bus for transportation over long distances.

Preschool-aged children (18kg and 4 1/2yrs) are safest restrained in appropriate child seat restraints anchored and tethered according to the specifications of Transport Canada if travelling in a school bus. PCDC will plan local field trips and activities that will not require the use of school bus for transportation for this population.'

Please see transportcanada.ca Child Seats on School Buses. Road Safety Fact Sheet. RS-2004-07E, TP2436E for more information.

Weather Conditions Affecting Outdoor Play / Outdoor Play Schedules

Outdoor play is an important aspect of PCDC's curriculum and occurs at least twice daily, in the morning and afternoon. Outdoor times are adjusted to reflect daylight savings time in the spring and late fall. The JK/SK and preschool programs co-ordinate their schedules to allow access to the playground at separate times.

In summer when the outdoor temperature is at **30°C** or higher, children's outdoor play will be restricted. In the event that the humidex is at **40°C** or higher, outdoor play will be cancelled. When temperature and/or wind chill factor indicates -28C or lower children will remain indoors due to risk of frost nip and frostbite. When temperatures and/or wind chill factor indicates -20 to -28C, outdoor play may be shortened. Children should be monitored closely for signs of frost nip, frostbite or difficulty breathing.

Any time outdoor play is not possible the children will participate in indoor gross motor activities.

PCDC No Smoking Policy

PALMERSTON COMMUNITY DAYCARE FOLLOWS ALL TDSB POLICIES WITH RESPECT TO NO SMOKING ON SCHOOL PROPERTY.

Tobacco Control Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005

The Tobacco Control Statute Law Amendment Act, 2005, would make all enclosed workplaces and public places across the province 100 per cent smoke-free by May 31, 2006. Designated smoking rooms (DSRs) would be eliminated.

All Palmerston Community Daycare Centre employees, parents and visitors will refrain from smoking at any time in all areas of the daycare indoors, outdoors and its surrounding areas.

Smoking and holding lighted tobacco is prohibited and will not be tolerated. It is prohibited to smoke or hold lighted tobacco in all outdoor areas surrounding the daycare and school (and its grounds) as defined in the *Education Act*, [BILL 16]. A 9 meter perimeter must be adhered to at all times.

A person found smoking will be asked to leave the premises and will be reminded of the fine they may incur if they do not accept the warning.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURE

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis, as required by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and Metro Children's Services.

During the fire drill procedures staff will:

1. escort children to the designated safety waiting area
2. close all windows and doors
3. bring attendance records and take attendance
4. exit with the children through the south end doors
5. check attendance again
6. wait for the bell or all clear signal before returning inside

The Director / Supervisor and any other adults present in the daycare will assist with the fire drill procedure.

REST PERIODS

Children requiring a nap do so between 12:45 and 2:45 p.m. in their classroom. Activities may be available in an alternate room as children awaken or outgrow their nap.

Each child has his/her personal bed sheet provided by the daycare that is laundered weekly, and a cot which is sterilized weekly.

FOOD

Nutritious morning and afternoon snacks are prepared by the daycare staff. A catered lunch is provided for all preschool and JK/SK children year round and for school age children during the school year only. During any school breaks the school age children may be required to bring their own lunch. They receive an afterschool snack throughout the school year as well as a morning snack and afternoon snack when they are in attendance for the entire day.

The menu for each week is posted on the parent information board, as well as in each classroom.

The entire centre is nut sensitive and includes all nut by-products. These **may not** be introduced into the daycare environment.

Parents/guardians must inform staff of any **food restrictions** or **allergies** that their child may have by indicating these restrictions or allergies on their child's registration form. Alternate foods will be provided when possible for children with allergies and/or restrictions. Parents/guardians may be required to provide alternate foods if food restrictions cannot be accommodated.

In the event that a child has a life-threatening anaphylaxis to a food(s) product, medication or other item, parents will be required to complete an anaphylaxis emergency plan. This plan must be signed by child's physician and initially reviewed together with daycare staff and parents and then on an annual basis for as long as the child is enrolled at PCDC.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are celebrated once a month with one cake in each classroom, that honours the children who have a birthday during that month. On each child's individual birthday younger children receive a personalized birthday crown to wear on their special day and all the children and staff sing Happy Birthday.

CLOTHING

Parents of younger children are required to provide an extra set of clothing for their child at daycare, particularly for the younger children. This includes underwear, socks, shirt, pants, indoor shoes, hat and mittens. Children will need these if they get wet. As articles of clothing can look similar we request that parents please try to **label all clothing with the child's name**.

Long scarves and anything worn around the neck which may in any way be considered dangerous by PCDC staff will not be permitted to be worn.

Children should wear hats and appropriate clothing to protect them from the sun while at daycare throughout the summer. Sunscreen is provided by the daycare and applied to each child with signed permission from parents/guardians. Staff will ensure that children have on sunscreen and hats before going outside.

FUNDRAISING

Palmerston Community Daycare Centre hosts a few fundraising opportunities throughout the year. The biggest of these is its annual Fallfest which first began in 2000 and has grown into a popular community event held in late September or early October on the school grounds.

Other fundraising events may include a bake sale, children's art sale and the sale of PCDC T-shirts at its annual Graduation celebration in June.

PCDC's Board of Director's fundraising committee consists of parents and staff and welcomes anyone interested in contributing their time and talents to help with its fundraising endeavors.