

**PARENT HANDBOOK
FOR COVID-19**

**St. Andrew's Co-OP
Playschool**

About Us

At **St. Andrew's Co-op**, we serve families with children 18 months to 5 years of age. We work in partnership with families, communities, and other service sectors to provide high quality early learning and childcare programs that promote and support education, health, and economic outcomes for families with young children.

Our Team

Our team of professionals includes Supervisors who are either Registered Early Childhood Educators, or who work with an RECE. They are responsible for developing and implementing our program and ensure your child's needs will be met while they are in our care.

Our staff have current Standard First Aid and Infant/Child CPR Certification and complete Vulnerable Sector Checks prior to their employment and on regular intervals after employment begins. Registered Early Childhood Educators are in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators. Each person on our team receives training and development on an on-going basis.

Care

We will provide care for children from 18 months to 5 years of age. Your child or children will be placed in a family grouping of various ages to ensure that we can maintain small group sizes and, as much as possible, physical distancing protocol. This also ensures that we maintain effective health and safety and infection prevention and control practices.

We will do our best to provide child care for your family, subject to the limitations required by the current circumstances, including Provincial, City, and Public Health directives. We believe every child belongs and will do our best to ensure that your child is welcomed into our centres. If your child has extra support needs requiring accommodation, please request an Accommodation Form so we can assess our ability to provide emergency child care that meets your child's individual needs, within the parameters of care possible during this emergency.

If we determine that we are unable to meet those needs despite our best efforts to accommodate your child, either as a result of the initial assessment or as circumstances develop, we reserve the right to decline or withdraw our child care services.

Response to COVID-19

St. Andrew's Co-op is dedicated to protecting the health and safety of your children, our staff, partners, and the community. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 and base our response and actions on recommendations from Public Health, the Ministry of Health, Health Canada and additional relevant authorities.

While infection prevention and control (IPAC) has always been an integral part of our child care culture, we have adapted and enhanced our policies and procedures in response to COVID-19, to mitigate risk and ensure the health and safety of all.

The following practices will be in place:

- Staff will be screened prior to entry into the facility,
- A screening area is isolated at the entrance of the child care centre,
- Only one parent can enter the screening area with their child/children,
- Children will be screened before entering the child care centre and monitored throughout the day for COVID-19 related symptoms,
- Children will be excluded from care if they develop any symptoms related to COVID-19,
- Policies and procedures have been developed specific to COVID-19 in order to increase the health and safety of children, staff and families,
- Staff will monitor children to ensure social distancing and infection prevention and control practices are prioritized,
- Staff will receive thorough enhanced infection prevention and control, and health and safety training. Training will be updated as necessary and provided to ensure best practices and consistency,
- Families are welcome to request information on health and safety as well as infection prevention and control; and
- Procedures will be updated and revised regularly to ensure best practices in accordance with Public Health authorities.

Duty to Report

We have a duty to report suspicions and disclosure of child abuse. If the supervisor and/or staff of the centre have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused, the suspicion, and the information upon which that suspicion is based, must be reported immediately to a Children's Aid Society.

A professional, who works with children, can be charged and fined for failing to report. It is the responsibility of the child protection agency to investigate and follow-up on the situation, as necessary.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected while in our care, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly. Any concern or complaint made by a parent or visitor that suggests an allegation of abuse will be reported to a local Children's Aid Society by the staff who received the complaint.

Behaviour Guidance

Our staff use behaviour guidance strategies that support children to develop appropriate social and emotional skills. St. Andrew's Co-op prohibits the following practices:

- corporal punishment,
- 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 centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures,
- 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.

If a staff member implements any of these practices, the appropriate children's protection agency would be notified and disciplinary action is taken, including notification to the College of Early Childhood Educators. Incidents of this nature are reported to the Ministry of Education as a Serious Occurrence.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, and staff, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Immunization

We are required to collect and retain up-to-date immunization for children in our care. Please provide us with current immunization information.

If your child has not been immunized, please provide The Statement of Medical Exemption Form completed by your health practitioner. You may also complete the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief which requires a signature by a Commissioner of Oath.

If you cannot provide either of these documents, we are unable to provide you with childcare.

If an outbreak occurs, a child who is not adequately immunized will not be able to attend care unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

Operating Hours

Classes run Monday through Friday.

Toddler class hours are 9:15 am to 11:45 a.m.

Preschool class hours are 9:00 am to 2:30 p.m.

Early drop off time: 8:30 a.m

Drop-Off Procedure

To ensure health and safety as well as stringent infection prevention and control practices, we will receive your child at the main entrance of the child care centre. At this time, our staff will greet you and health screen your child. We will also receive and disinfect belongings at this time. We understand that this may be unsettling; however, this step will ensure that the childcare setting remains free of infection. Our staff will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Pick-Up Procedure

Please share instructions and/or custody arrangements with the supervisor concerning pick up or access to your child and ensure we are notified of any changes. We will only release your child to individuals that you have authorized for pick up. We may confirm identity by requesting government issued identification.

When you (or your designate) arrive at the centre to pick up your child, we will verify your identity and bring your child to you at the entrance of the childcare centre. This practice is used to ensure physical distancing protocol.

When Your Child is Sick

Staff will complete a basic health check and screening to ensure your child is asymptomatic when they arrive. Your child will also be monitored throughout the day.

If your child is showing ill symptoms at home (e.g. sore throat, stomach ache, headache, cough, lethargy, change in appetite) your child should not attend care and should remain home and isolate for 14 days. If symptoms persist on the 14th day, please contact the supervisor for further direction.

If your child becomes sick at the centre, they will be separated from the other children and supervised by one of our staff members. We will notify you to pick up your child. If it is appropriate and feasible, we will place a mask on your child. If your child requires immediate medical attention, your child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner.

If you or your child are/have been managed by Public Health, (e.g., confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) follow instructions from the health department to determine when to return to the facility.

Medication

Our staff will only administer prescription medication. Prescription medication must be provided in the original bottle/packaging, clearly labeled with your child's name, and instructions for administering. Parents must complete and sign the appropriate medication administration form before the medication can be administered by our staff. Please try to minimize the amount of medication that is administered at the child care centre.

Non-prescription or over the counter medication must be accompanied by a written prescription by a medical practitioner outlining the exact dosage and time(s) to be given and symptoms of when to administer the medication.

For the safety of the children, all medication must be handed directly to a staff member staff so that it can be securely stored away from the children's reach.

Individual Medical Plan

An Individual Medical Plan will be developed and put in place for any child requiring medication for a chronic or acute condition or diagnosis or who requires medication on an emergency basis. All individual medical plans will be developed in partnership with the child's parent/guardian.

Allergies and Anaphylaxis

Let us know if your child has an allergy that requires the administration of an auto-injector. We will need written and specific details of your child's allergy and symptoms of an allergic reaction from a medical practitioner including a prescribed epinephrine auto-injector. All allergies will be listed in our program to ensure all employees can respond appropriately to any potential reactions. If your child requires an auto-injector due to a severe allergy, it must accompany them into care or be stored here at school.

Accidents and Injuries

Despite close supervision, accidents may occur. If your child is injured at the centre, the staff will provide immediate first aid. If the situation requires attention beyond basic first aid, we will contact you or the emergency contact person on file. If required, we will call 911. If your child experiences a head injury, you will be contacted.

Staff will provide you with an accident report documenting the accident or injury. A parent or guardian's signature is required at the bottom of the form to verify that you were informed of the accident/injury. A copy of the signed report will be provided to you.

If your child has an accident or injury at home, please inform the staff when you drop off your child the following day, so we are aware of the incident.

Snack/Lunch program

Nutritious and healthy foods are served daily. Food will be purchased and prepared by the staff ahead of time.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play time will be used to support our efforts to maintain physical distance requirements and support children's immune systems. It is important that children be dressed for various types of weather to ensure they can actively participate in the outdoor program. Please ensure that adequate and suitable clothing and footwear is provided as well as individually labeled sunscreen during the summer months.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please provide us with everything your child requires on a daily basis. This includes diapers, diaper cream, bottles, soothers, and indoor and outdoor clothing. Stuffed animals and other soft toys are not recommended.

Respectful Environment

Everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated. This is an expectation of everyone entering into either of our centres. Failure to adhere to this expectation may result in denied access to the centre.

If a parent/guardian or employee feels threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor.

Complaints

If you have a concern or complaint concerning your child's care, we encourage you to speak to the Supervisor of your child's program directly. If not available on the premises, please send an email. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Complaints are reviewed promptly and we attempt to resolve them quickly. We monitor complaints and use them to improve the quality of service we are able to provide to you. Complaints are treated confidentially and steps will be taken to help protect your privacy. You will be informed when a decision is made and provided with an explanation for the decision. Complaints involving staff conduct will be investigated and you will be informed when it is resolved; however, no disciplinary information can be shared.

- All written complaints will be responded to in writing.
- While there are certain steps that need to be taken to ensure fairness for all concerned, there can be unavoidable delays; however, we will treat each case in a prompt and thorough manner.

If you are making a verbal complaint, you may be asked to put your complaint in writing, especially if it involves a serious or complex matter.