

HAMILTON - WENTWORTH  
Catholic Child Care Centres



**Child Care  
Parent  
Handbook**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres (HWCCCC) is a not for profit corporation governed by community representatives and personnel from the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board.

**HWCCCC exists so that children are nurtured and their families are supported within a Catholic environment.**

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres (HWCCCC) is committed to providing quality early learning programs within Catholic School environments. The Ministry of Education's Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) along with "How Does Learning Happen?" is the framework that guides our policies, procedures, and daily practices. We encourage you to read our Program Statement that is included as an insert in our Parent Handbook and on our website.

We believe that children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. Our programs strive to:

- encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate by observing and role modeling problem solving techniques.
- foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry by offering a variety of materials and play experiences.
- provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences that are open ended, varied, and rich in content.
- plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported through observations, documentation, and reflection.

Our programs promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well being of the children by:

- conducting daily health checks on all children
- ensuring allergies, food preferences, and medical conditions/requirements are posted.
- completing appropriate checks to make sure outdoor and indoor play spaces are safe from any hazards prior to children using the areas.
- Supervising children at all times
- ensuring attendance will be taken with times recorded upon children's arrival and departure from a program.

- planning menus that are diverse in culture and incorporate “Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide”. Menus will be posted for the current and following week.
- Following and posting instructions from parents regarding dietary requirement/preferences
- Feeding children under 1 year old, in accordance to written instructions from a parent/guardian.
- Making drinking water readily available for all children at all times

Our programs incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, giving consideration to the individual needs of the children by:

- providing at least 2 hours of outdoor play time per day(weather permitting) for programs operating 6 hours per day or more and a minimum of 30 minutes per day for school age children.
- offering a variety of play materials both indoor and outdoor.
- offering a quiet, relaxing, environment that encourages the children to rest/sleep.
- following parent instructions for sleep/rest

HWCCCC believes that families are active contributors to their children's learning and are key to their early learning development. HWCCCC will:

- support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents, and staff through open communication and feedback. Also providing opportunities for families, educators, and children to gather at events such as BBQs, Open Houses...
- foster the engagement of ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children through daily verbal feedback, parent surveys, newsletters, parent information boards, program website, and pedagogical documentation throughout the classrooms.

Our organization will employ caring, supportive staff committed to continuous professional learning and to working together with the families, the school, the parish and community partners to better support our children and their families. We will:

- involve local community partners and allow partners to support the children, their families and staff by offering our facilities for meetings, observations, workshops, and to collaborate together as partners to ensure individual needs are being met.

- support staff in their professional learning by providing opportunities for mentoring, staff development and memberships to professional organizations.

**Our child care programs are in keeping with the fundamental characteristics and objectives that distinguish Catholic Schools and complement the programs of Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board.**

### **PROGRAMS OFFERED**

#### **INFANT PROGRAM (0 to 18months):**

- Provides full day care

#### **TODDLER PROGRAM (18 to 30 months):**

- Provides full day care

#### **PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (2 ½ to 4 years old):**

- Provides full day care

#### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM:**

- Provides care for children attending school all day from ages 3.8-12 years of age. The program operates from September to June when the school is open. (P.A. Day care, December Holidays, March Break and Summer care is offered at select locations)

**CONFIRM WITH THE SUPERVISOR ON SITE IN REGARDS TO THE TYPE OF PROGRAMS OFFERED AT YOUR LOCATION**

### **DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION**

- Full Day programs – Care is provided for fifty-two weeks each year. Program hours reflect the needs of the community.
- Before and After School Programs – Care is provided from September to June. Before school care starts at 7:00 am until school commences. After school care starts at dismissal time until 6:00pm.

## **WAIT LIST/ENROLMENT AND SERVICE TERMINATION**

HWCCCC does not charge a wait list fee. Parents can inquire at any time their child's status on the wait list. First priority for admission to programs located in an elementary school is given to children or their siblings who are enrolled in that school. First priority for admission to a program in a secondary school shall be given to children of students enrolled in the school where the program is located.

All families who request admission to child care with HWCCCC will be placed on a waiting list unless there is a space immediately available. When a space becomes available, the family will be invited to the Centre to meet with the supervisor, and to register their child with HWCCCC.

The family is provided with a tour of the Centre, an orientation to its programs, and a review of specific policies. Play visits are strongly encouraged to allow the child(ren) to become familiarized with the Centre.

If at any time a child is having difficulty at the Centre, and support strategies and interventions have not been able to alleviate the difficulty, HWCCCC reserves the right to suspend or terminate a child from the program.

**Two weeks' notice must be given** prior to:

1. The withdrawal of a child from the Centre
2. Decreasing your child care days

If proper notice is not given, the parent will be required to pay for two additional weeks of regular fees.

## **CHILDREN'S BELONGINGS**

Children's clothing, outerwear, and other belongings should be clearly labelled with the child's name. A change of clothing should be left at the Centre in the event of a spill or an accident. We take no responsibility for loss or breakage of any item brought from home.

## **ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP**

Children attending the Centre **must be brought into** the program by a parent or designated person and announced to the staff. Parents **must come into** the Centre and inform staff of their departure when picking up children.

Children will not be released to any person other than those specified on the registration forms. If someone else is to pick up the child, staff must receive parent authorization before the child is released. All persons, including parents, may be asked to show photo identification prior to a child being released to them.

Where a child has not been picked up by the closing time at the Centre and the parent has not made contact with the centre, the staff will try to contact the parent at home or work. If the parent cannot be reached, staff will contact the emergency contact persons on the child's file.

If the child has not been picked up 30 minutes after the centre closing time and no contact has been made, staff will contact the appropriate Children's Aid Society so appropriate arrangements can be made for the child.

**In the event of a disaster the predetermined designated place of emergency shelter for the staff and children is posted on the fire evacuation procedure located in the Centre.**

## **LATE PICK UP/FEES**

**Centre times of operation are set with the expectation that children will be picked-up and out of the centre by closing time.**

Where a parent is unable to complete a pick up prior to the closing time due to exceptional circumstance, it is the obligation of the parent to:

- Contact an emergency back up to arrange for alternate pick up and advise that person to bring photo ID to show Centre staff
- Contact staff to advise of the change in routine.

Where a parent is on their way to pick up their child and will arrive after the closing time of the Centre, it is their obligation to inform the staff of the circumstances and expected arrival time.

If the child is picked up past the time of Centre closure, the parent will be charged a late pick up fee (*for each child*) of five dollars (\$5.00) for each five minute period or part thereof.

The clock at the Centre shall be used as the official time. Late fees are to be paid to the staff on duty at the time of the late pick up.

After two late pick-ups parents will receive a warning. A third occurrence could result in the forfeit of the child's place in the Centre.

## **NUTRITION**

A copy of the menu will be posted in the Centre for the current week as well as the following week and will reflect recommendations of Canada's Food Guide.

Full Day programs serve a nutritious mid-day meal, morning and afternoon snacks each day.

Before and After school programs serve a nutritious free flow morning snack and an afternoon snack which includes a minimum of 2 food groups. Where Ministry approval has been granted, parents will supply bag lunches for children who attend full day programmes (PA Days, March Break, Christmas...). This will be confirmed upon enrolment if applicable at your location.

## **ALLERGIES**

Recognizing the importance of a safe environment for all children; the staff and volunteers of HWCCCC will attempt to take the necessary precautions to protect children from allergic reactions. Parents must keep staff up-dated on a child's allergies and together they will develop a plan and identify the appropriate course of action in the event that the child has an allergic reaction.

Children's special dietary needs and allergies are posted in the cooking and serving areas as well located on the daily attendance that travels with the staff and children to the playground, field trips....

## **ROLE OF PARENTS IN PROGRAM**

Ongoing communication between staff and parents is essential to ensure that a program is meeting a child's needs. Staff is expected to communicate with parents daily to inform them about their child's day at the Centre. Important events or issues that arise in a child's life often impact on them in different ways. It is important for staff and parents to establish open communication to ensure that information that may assist the child at the Centre is shared freely.



We believe that parents are our partners in ensuring quality child care, and we encourage their involvement at the Centre; volunteering to help on a trip, at a special event and in other ways help to make the Centre stronger.

**It is essential that centre files be kept up to date. Parents must notify the staff immediately of any changes to telephone numbers or any other information on the registration form.**

### **PROCESS FOR EXPRESSING CONCERN**

Staff will be proactive in soliciting feedback regarding the quality of service provided to users of their Centre and will deal with complaints in a professional, respectful and timely manner. A collaborative approach to problem solving will be utilized to resolve all complaints.

We encourage all clients to review our Parents Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures on our website [www.hwccccc.ca](http://www.hwccccc.ca).

### **FIELD TRIPS & OFF SITE ACTIVITIES**

As a part of our regular programming, off-site activities that compliment our curriculum may be planned. Parents must sign a consent form prior to their child participating in the off- site activity. Children will not be allowed to attend without a signed consent form. In the event that a child does not have permission to attend a field trip or off- site activity, parents will be expected to find alternate care for their child for that day. Everyday trips around the neighbourhood do not require permission slips. The Supervisor will notify parents of any additional charges for field trips or special events. It is the approach of HWCCCC to keep these fees to a minimum.

### **STUDENTS/VOLUNTEERS**

- HWCCCC encourages strong curriculum links between our programs and affiliated schools.
- It is our policy to provide training whenever possible for students in this field or in other related fields.
- Students and volunteers are subject to staff rules, regulations and policies, *will never be left alone and will be supervised by a staff at all times.*

## **HEALTH AND ADMINISTRATION OF DRUGS**

1. Prescription Medications must be provided in their original container as supplied by a pharmacist and must be labelled with:
  - The child's name and Doctor
  - The name of the drug
  - DIN number
  - The dosage of the drug
  - The date of purchase and expiry date
  - Instructions for storage and administration
2. Non-prescription drugs will only be administered with a doctor's note stating why the drug is needed and accurate instructions. The seal on the medication must not be broken when given to the Centre. The bottle must be labelled with:
  - The child's name and Doctor
  - The name of the drug
  - DIN number (if applicable)
  - The dosage of the drug
  - The date of purchase and expiry date
  - Instructions for storage and administration
3. Topical cream such as diaper cream and sunscreen will also be applied at the request of the parent. Topical agents must be in the original container and be labelled with the child's name. An authorization of administration form giving clear instructions, signed by the parent will need to be completed.

***To facilitate prompt administration of asthma and other emergency medications a written procedure outlining where the medication is to be stored and how the medication is to be administered (e.g. self-management and administration) will be developed in consultation with the child's parents and physician).***

## **ILLNESS/INJURY OF A CHILD**

1. Regulations require that all children play outdoors for a part of each day. If a child is too ill to play outdoors, that child must be kept home.
2. A child who has experienced any of the following in the preceding 24 hours will not be accepted in to the Centre: diarrhea, fever, vomiting, earache, discharge (yellow/white) from eyes, severe cough, open sores or unexplained rashes, severe pain or inconsolable discomfort, or colds that might hinder regular activity. Parents are encouraged to consider their child's needs and comfort as well as the health of staff and other children in making a decision about whether to bring their child to the Centre.

3. Before re-admission to the Centre after an infectious disease, or an absence of more than 3 days, the child's parent may be required to provide a written note from a physician verifying the child's health.
4. If any of the preceding symptoms are displayed while a child is in the Centre, the child will be separated from the other children because of a suspected illness and the parent or authorized parent contact will be required to pick up the child within one hour.
5. A school -aged child who becomes ill during school will not be allowed to attend the Child Care Program. School staff is responsible for contacting parents regarding the child's illness.

**Proper hand washing has been shown to be the most effective way to prevent the spread of germs and/or infections. Children will be encouraged to thoroughly wash their hands upon entry to the program and at various times throughout the day.**

### **Head Lice**

Children who have had head lice are not admitted back into the program until they have had one full treatment for head lice and are free of live nits.

### **ENSURING A PROGRAM MEETS A CHILD'S NEEDS**

We strive to meet the needs of all children and will work with parents and community partners to try to ensure a program meets a child's needs. We do this by employing well-trained, caring staff who creates an environment that is educational, supportive, stimulating and inclusive. On-going communication between staff and parents is essential. If at any time a child is having difficulty in a program the following are appropriate procedures to develop a program to try to ensure success:

- The teacher communicates with the child directly
- The teacher seeks support from the supervisor and/or other staff members
- The teacher reviews concerns with the parent(s)
- The staff reviews the situation as a team and develops a consistent response.
- A conference involving parent(s), teacher, supervisor is scheduled to discuss concerns and set direction or strategies; a date for review should be set at this time

- At any point, staff as well as parents may consider the involvement of outside agencies or professionals where this would be appropriate.

These procedures are not necessarily always followed sequentially; the appropriate intervention or strategy may depend on the severity of the occurrences or behaviours.

Group care is not necessarily appropriate for all children. HWCCCC reserves the right to suspend or terminate a child from a program:

- If the child continues to have difficulty in a program after appropriate measures as outlined above have been followed
- If his/her behaviour is so disruptive that it inhibits the participation of other children in centre activities.

## **CHILD GUIDANCE**

In order to support the growth and development of all children in our care, their behaviour will be addressed using positive, age-appropriate methods based on current child development and early learning practices and in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act. All HWCCCC staff must manage children's behaviour in ways that support the child to learn and grow.

### **Guidance Techniques For Young Children**

- Children will be guided in a positive manner that is appropriate to their age and developmental level.
- Guidance will assist children to learn self-discipline and appropriate behaviours.
- Limits or rules of an activity or play area will be clearly outlined to all children and will be repeated as needed.
- Regular staff intervention will be in the form of praise, hugging, encouraging comments and reminders to children..
- Staff will use soft, supportive voices, model acceptable behaviour and not discuss the children's behaviour in their presence.
- Children in attendance will be supervised at all times.
- Snacks/meals – children will be encouraged to feed themselves and to taste all foods. Force-feeding or the withholding of any food or drink is not permitted.
- Rest time – children will rest each day after the noon meal. Anyone unable to sleep after one hour will be allowed to play quietly under supervision.

- Washroom – children will be assisted through the washroom routine according to the amount of adult help they require. Hands must be washed after going to the bathroom and before eating.
- Transitions: children will be streamed into small groups to the washroom, cloakroom and sleeproom and will not be made to wait without teacher directed activities. (E.g. holding circle). Lining up should be discouraged.
- If any staff feels they are losing patience with a child or a situation, it is important to ask for help or relief. This is not viewed as a weakness but rather a professional behaviour. Lack of patience or frustration should never be a reason to penalize a child.

The following techniques will be used with young children:

- Wherever behaviour is attention seeking it will be ignored unless it poses a potential danger.
- Children will be given clear direction regarding limits of the play area or routines.
- Children unable to comply will be re-directed to another activity.
- Children will be given a choice of two or three alternative activities.
- Staff will acknowledge the child's feelings.
- Staff response to behaviour will be in a soft, supportive voice.

### **Guidance Techniques For School Age Children Include:**

- Developing house rules with input from the children, to ensure the personal rights and safety of each child are protected. The house rules should be posted in large print at the child's level. (The School Code of Behaviour should be referenced in the house rules.)
- Discussing the house rules with each child as an orientation to the program and reviewing them with the group regularly. Parents must also be informed and kept up to date about the rules.
- Adapting the house rules to respond to the current needs of the children with clearly defined consequences for non-compliance. The children should be given an opportunity to give input into the appropriate types of consequences.
- Giving the children an opportunity to develop problem-solving skills. (i.e. "How could you have handled that differently?" "What do you think you should do to handle this problem?")
- Giving the children appropriate opportunities to demonstrate independence and responsibility.
- Providing positive feedback to children.

## **Prohibited Practices**

No staff, volunteer or student shall use:

- corporal punishment
- physical restraint of a child, such as confining the child to a high chair, care 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 the child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
- locking the exits of the child care centre premises for the purpose of confining a 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 organizations 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 a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will

## **FEE PAYMENT**

HWCCCC fees for child care services are based on the ongoing costs of operations and the cost of other comparable child care programs.

Fees are paid to HWCCCC by pre-authorized payment (PAD). A payment schedule will be provided to you upon enrollment of your child.

**Payments are due prior to care with Hamilton Wentworth Catholic Child Care Centres Inc.(or HWCCCC Inc.)**

A returned pre-authorized payment (PAD) fee will be charged for any PAD that is returned by your Financial Institution. After two returned PADs you will be required to make your child care payments by certified cheques or money orders.

**Child care fees will remain the same** should a child be absent from the child care centre, regardless of whether the absence is caused by illness, vacation or for any other reason.

There will be no reductions to fees for days when the Centre is closed due to statutory or designated school holidays, or if the Centre is closed due to weather or other emergency circumstances.

**Note: fees remain the same for all recognized holidays (including Easter Monday).**

### **OVERDUE FEES**

The finance department will

- ❖ Speak to parents with any concerns with regarding their accounts

### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

Each child care centre will follow the schools emergency management policy and procedure.

Staff will ensure that all children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation.

If the school is needing to be locked down, information will be posted on the school website at [www.hwcdsb.ca](http://www.hwcdsb.ca). We ask that you do not call the school, updates will be provided when available.

If we need to evacuate the building, the following steps will be taken:

1. Children will be re-located to their designated emergency shelter location
2. Staff will bring emergency contact information and all emergency medications with them
3. Once the children are settled in the new location, child care staff will contact parents to inform them of our re-location and provide further direction
4. Parents will be given the option to pick up their child early or at regular dismissal time if permitted