



***The Family Place***

***Milton Parent Handbook***

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**Updated August 2022 - Please refer to the Covid-19 policies, as some of the information in this handbook will be affected by the pandemic guidelines.**

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**Chapter One: General Information**

The Family Place is a non-profit organization, run by a Board of Directors. It consists of two child care centres; one based in Bishop Reding High School in Milton and the second in Heritage Glen Public School in Oakville.

### **Mission Statement**

**“Committed to the provision of child care for children, from infancy through to ten years of age, in a supportive, child-centred environment, where discovery and challenge lead to learning and well-being.”**

### **History**

The Family Place was the brainchild of a group of people in the early 1980s that saw a need for extended services for children and their families in the Milton area. The group worked with the community and especially the Children’s Aid Society in creating the plans for a child care centre focusing on infants and toddlers, as well as servicing high risk families who were in need of support with their parenting skills. In 1982, a centre for 10 Infants, 15 Toddlers and 16 Preschoolers, was opened in an empty wing of the Regional Senior’s Home in Milton, now known as Allendale. 10 of the 41 spots were reserved for children of high risk families that might have otherwise been sent to foster homes. While the children gained developmental

strengths in the program at the centre, their parents participated in a Parenting Program that involved them in both counselling and actual observing in their child's classroom. It was a tremendous success and blended with an Intergenerational Program with the seniors, created a program that won the Margaret Fletcher Award in 1983 for outstanding innovation in child care.

Over the years, funding sources have changed and the involvement with the Children's Aid Society has changed. The centre's Parenting Program became part of the Children's Assessment and Treatment Centre (CATC), providing community-wide family support. Allendale was redeveloped and the child care centre found a new home in 1991, at Bishop Reding High School in Milton. In 1995, with a desire to expand, The Family Place opened a second centre in Heritage Glen Public School in Oakville. This provided an opportunity to expand our program to older children in a school-based setting where the emphasis would be on creating a virtually seamless day between child care and the school. Again, we have been overwhelmed with our acceptance and learned so much from creative school-age staff and elementary educators.

Having two centres about 20 kilometres apart, is a challenge for any organization, but we feel we have overcome many hurdles and work very hard to see ourselves as a team in two rather different settings.

## **Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors is composed of parent and community volunteers, who have an interest in the childcare sector and supporting the organization. All parents are encouraged to be active participants during Board meetings.

The Annual General Meeting is held every May. Ballots are emailed to parents, where parents can nominate the individuals in the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The board meets bi-monthly, taking a break over the summer. Meetings are held alternately at the Milton or Oakville centres or through zoom. Generally, the meetings last about one hour. Please contact the Executive Director or your centre Supervisor if you wish to have a Board Orientation Package or to attend a meeting. These meetings will give parents a more in depth look at governance and operations of the centres.

## **Program Statement (A11)**

The Family Place provides high quality child care in an enriched atmosphere. We welcome all families who would like to share their children with our trained staff. With openness to culture, race, religion and abilities, we ensure that all children and their families are treated with respect and dignity. We believe that children bring their own unique talents to our classrooms as competent, capable and curious individuals. As educators, we provide a positive learning environment which enhances children's experiences and encourages exploration within the world around them. We support

positive and responsive interactions with our children, their parents/guardians, our staff and our community partners fostering the engagement of ongoing communication. The staff at The Family Place believe that children benefit when we work hand in hand with families and collaborate with community partners to support their growth and development.

### **Emergent Curriculum**

Our programs are licensed under the Ministry of Education's *Child Care Early Years Act*. Our staff is trained in the pedagogy: *How Learning Happens, Ontario Early Learning Framework, Think Feel Act* and *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT, <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/>)*. Emergent Curriculum is responsive to children's interests by enabling them to engage in meaningful exploration in their surroundings. By taking the child's lead, the staff and children build an interactive space which enhances their imagination and creativity. The educators engage the children during play, listening, responding and encouraging dialogue to expand their play. We take their cues and enhance the classroom activities, allowing the children to build onto their own knowledge.

### **The Role of the Educator**

Our educators believe in the importance of reflective practices. They reflect on their experiences with the children to build a continuous learning forum that enhances both the child's and the educator's own development. It is our belief that children are competent thinkers and learners. Each child is thought of as an individual, giving them the opportunities to grow and develop at their own pace. Children respond when they are heard and when activities reflect their own interests. We acknowledge that children's actions and ideas are key to their growth. Through the use of open-ended questions and meaningful conversations, we dig deeper into what children are thinking in order to expand their learning opportunities.

Our educators observe the children throughout their day. The educators talk with children, listening and expanding on the children's interests. The educators then build on these interests by incorporating activities into the classroom and in the playground. The children can move from area to area, freely taking activities with them to enhance and build on their play. The educators engage in the children's play, asking questions, encouraging language, inviting other children in to expand the play. They may introduce different activities to broaden the learning moments, gathering in large and small groups. These spontaneous moments are what lead the classroom to different learning moments.

Our educators follow pedagogical documentation, whereby they make daily observations, then use this information to build onto the existing activities, to enhance their learning process. Our educators document this information on their white boards through anecdotes and pictures. The white boards are located in each classroom. Each day, the educators add to the boards the children's statements, their work, and pictures of the children engaged in activities. This documentation is not only for educators to review, and then expand on the learning moments, but for the children to visualize their progress. Parents are encouraged to take a moment each day and look at the progress their child and their peers are making. This can start a conversation about child development.

The interest on the board can last a week, or up to a month, all depending on the interest of the children and how far the classroom wants to go. The educators take pictures of their boards and file them in a binder for future use. The educators may look back on some ideas they have used before or review with the children what they have talked about previously with visual cues.

The Supervisors support the classrooms daily by visiting each classroom, listening to the educator/child interactions and ensuring the interests are being explored and expanded. Each classroom has a designated monthly date and time to meet with the Supervisor to go over any concerns or challenges within the classroom. This enables the educators to have time to brainstorm without interruption. Strategies are discussed, and the Supervisor follows through during daily visits to the classrooms.

As educators, we reflect on child development theories with co-workers and professionals in our field to support and enhance the growth of each child at The Family Place. Our belief is that children learn through trial and error. Our educators can best support the child through conversation, positive redirection and follow through. We look at the child's ability to process information, adapting to the strengths and needs of the child. We support the child's ability to self-regulate by allowing them the time to process their actions, reactions and to move beyond the situation. Our educators participate throughout the process to ensure all parties feel heard and a solution is acceptable to all parties. We believe children are more apt to retain information when they are part of the process, a skill for lifelong learning.

### **Professional Development**

The Family Place is a member of the highest level of Halton Region's Quality First, an early learning initiative. We are committed to high quality in our programs and in our educator/child interactions. The commitment of our long-term staff shows their passion

in the child care field. Most of our educators are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators, while other educators bring a wealth of knowledge in this field. To maintain our high standards, The Family Place requires its educators to update their professional development yearly through workshops, conferences and webinars.

We have many opportunities for professional and personal development through Halton Region. Staff is able to share their experiences during staff meetings, allowing all our educators the ability to enhance their development. We hold monthly staff meetings at each centre and every three months we hold joint staff meetings, where both centres come together to have a professional development evening from a speaker or visit the other's centre for ideas and dialogue surrounding Emergent Curriculum, Loose Parts and the ELECT documentation. We invite other centres to join in this sharing evening. This allows the building of partnerships, engaging in information sharing and allowing for the enhancement of our profession

### **Behaviour Guidance**

Behaviour guidance is a technique of using positive strategies that enhances a sense of belonging and well-being for children in our care. Once a child enters our program, we need to build caring, respectful relationships with them. We need to look at each situation from the child's perspective. Behaviour guidance is an ongoing process.

**Environment** - Are there enough activities for all children, is there enough space for the children to freely play and interact with each other.

**Transitions** - Give children notice prior to a transition; work with small groups during transitions which give children more time with an educator.

**Positive Social Interactions** –Role model positive interactions with children, families and staff.

**Self-regulation** – Offer children time to absorb their surroundings, acknowledge their feelings, offer fidget toys and quiet areas for children to relax. Look at the child's emotional state, are their outside sources affecting their emotional state.

**Look at our own judgments** – Are we emotionally open, do we have support in the classroom from peers, are we free from judgement, and be patient with ourselves?

### **BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE IS:**

- Related to the nature of the behaviour
- Appropriate to the developmental level of the child
- Used in a positive and consistent manner
- Aimed at separating the behaviour from the child (the deed from the doer)
- Designed to assist the child in learning appropriate behaviour and self-regulation
- Discussed with parents if a difficult situation arises or is ongoing with a child

## **Procedure**

- Approach quickly and calmly to stop hurtful or unsafe behaviour right away,
- Acknowledge each child's feelings,
- Gather information from each child involved,
- Identify and state the problem to the children,
- Brainstorm solutions with the children,
- Allow the children to develop a solution and use it, if the child is having difficulty coming up with a solution, give them choices
- Follow through, facilitate the interaction with the children if need be

## **Prohibited Practices**

### **THE CHILD CARE EARLY YEARS ACT STATES THAT NO OPERATOR SHALL PERMIT:**

1. Corporal punishment of the child;
2. 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;
3. Locking the exits of the child care centre 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;
4. 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;
5. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

The staff at The Family Place is expected to comply with the program's stated policies and procedures and the requirements of the CCEYA with respect to behaviour management.

## **Dangerous or Disruptive Behaviours**

In the case where behaviour is out of control on a consistent and regular basis, the staff, in conjunction with the Supervisor and/or Executive Director, will meet with the parents.

With input from both sides, a behaviour plan will be outlined that will identify the areas of concern and map out strategies to be implemented both at home and at the centre. Where the child is in the school-age program, a contract may be signed with the child.

In severe cases where dangerous or disruptive behaviours continue, the child may be asked to leave child care. This decision will be made by the Executive Director, only after a behaviour plan has been given a reasonable try.

### **Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Policy**

The Family Place (FP) is committed to providing a safe, healthy and supportive working environment for all by treating our employees and clients with dignity, respect, fairness and sensitivity. FP is also committed to the principles set out in Bill 168, Bill 132 and in the Ontario Human Rights Code that every employee has a right to freedom from violence, sexual violence, harassment and sexual harassment in the workplace. Each employee must equally assume responsibilities in achieving this result. The management of FP will make every reasonable effort to identify potential sources of violence and harassment and to eliminate or minimize these risks through our Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy and Procedures.

### **Health and Safety**

The Family Place meets or exceeds all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and Halton Region. The Family Place promotes health and safety through our policies and procedures, which are approved by our Board of Directors. All staff are required to read and follow all policies and procedures. They are reviewed during the staff's annual evaluations. All policies and procedures can be found on our website.

All staff are trained in Standard First Aid and CPR/AED, with recertification completed every three years. Staff, volunteers, and students over 18 must have a recent Police Vulnerable Sector Check (PVSC) prior to employment at The Family Place. All staff present an original copy of their PVSC prior to working at The Family Place. On the anniversary of this PVSC, all staff will sign a Declaration of Offence each year for four years and in the fifth year; they are required to produce a new PVSC. Staff cannot work or volunteer at The Family Place without a current PVSC.

### **Nutrition**

The Family Place realizes that children in child care receive a large portion of their daily nutrition away from home. In order to ensure that your children receive the nutrition they need while at our centres, we follow the recommendations set out in Health Canada's *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* and *Nutrition for Health Term Infants*. Food for

Tots supplies our children with nutritious hot lunches, approved by a registered dietician. Our floater staff purchases and prepares nutritious snacks daily, ensuring that two food groups are served at each sitting. Children are supervised at all mealtimes for safety and to encourage positive mealtime practices. No foods are to be brought into the centres by parents without prior approval from Supervisors. An ingredient list must be provided.

### **Individual Anaphylaxis and Medical Plans**

When a parent declares that their child is anaphylaxis to an agent or has a medical need, the Supervisor will provide the appropriate individual plan to the parent. The parent will fill out the form, returning it to the Supervisor. The parent can train the staff, Supervisor or bring in a doctor to train the staff. This is at the parent's discretion.

Prior to the child starting at the centre, the Supervisor will review the training with the staff, volunteers and students then sign the back of the form.

All staff, volunteers and students will review the plans prior to commencing work at The Family Place.

Parents will be requested to review their children's plans annually. Staff, volunteers and students will review the plans annually, signing the back of the forms.

### **Anaphylaxis Emergency Alert Plan**

-Some of our children and staff are allergic to certain foods, medicines, insects and latex. When they come in contact with these items, they have a severe allergic reaction. When a family comes to us acknowledging their child is anaphylactic to a certain substance or item, we take it very seriously.

-Parents will fill out the Emergency Anaphylaxis Plan, outlining:

- the child's allergens,
- type of reaction and if so, symptoms
- type of epi-pen

-This form is reviewed by the parents annually, prior to the expiry date of the epi-pen.

-The original plan is kept in the office, where a copy is posted in the child's classroom, kitchen, serving area, and a copy is kept in the emergency contact classroom binder, to ensure this form is with the child at all times.

### **Individual Plan for Medical Needs**

-Some of our children come to us with medical needs. The Medical plan will support the inclusion of children within our program.

Parents will fill out the Medical Plan, outlining:

- steps to reduce exposure to the agent or situation,
- description of medical devices and instructions
- procedures to be followed in event of reaction or medical emergency
- description of supports available to your child
- procedures to be followed in the event of an evacuation or field trip

The original plan is kept in the office, where a copy is posted in the child's classroom and a copy is kept in the emergency contact classroom binder, to ensure this form is with the child at all times.

### **Food Intolerance and Restrictions**

Allergy lists contain the child's name and food intolerance or food restriction. The allergy lists are posted in the kitchen, serving area, all classrooms and attached to the emergency contact classroom binder, to ensure this form is with them at all times. Staff is asked to review these allergy lists daily prior to meal time.

### **Exploration**

Play shapes a child's growth and development. Play is spontaneous, allowing children to lead the play on their own terms, making their own choices. Play allows children to use their imagination and build onto their own knowledge. They build their social skills, learning from their peers, through reasoning and problem solving. Educators invite the children into play, through gestures and activities. This broadens their knowledge to support their growth and development.

Opportunities for play are found inside and outside the classroom. Our indoor classrooms are set up for free-flowing exploration. Our outdoor areas are set up for children to explore the nature around them. Weather depending, children at our centres have opportunities to engage in outdoor play for two hours per day. This is typically split between the morning and afternoon. This balance allows the children to experience fresh air twice a day. Infants, toddlers and preschoolers require a daily quiet/rest time to be able to rejuvenate and reflect on their experiences during their busy day. Indoor and outdoor areas are arranged to the best of our ability so that all children can move freely and make choices based on their abilities, interests and needs.

### **Community Members**

The Family Place believes that being part of our community supports everyone's well-being and engagement. As both our centres are located in schools, our number

one community partners are the educators, custodians, students and principals at Bishop Reding and Heritage Glen. Both Kelly and Wendy have built strong connections with the schools over the years, allowing The Family Place to feel a part of their community. Our children observe the older children throughout their comings and goings from school, showing our children the enjoyment of attending school, and their positive interactions on the school property. Our children are invited to performances throughout the school year, along with the ability to utilize the gyms during inclement weather, allowing our children to explore the world around them.

We invited community members to showcase their talents while broadening our children's learning opportunities. The local librarian visited the Milton centre for our Literacy week. She read books to the children and handed out library cards to parents, encouraging literacy at home. The Oakville centre invites special guests that showcase exotic animals, as well as having the opportunity to walk to the local grocery store to purchase goods for their program.

### **Volunteers and Students**

The Family Place recognizes the value of having parent volunteers, co-op students and students in ECE placements. However, we also recognize the necessity of providing a safe environment for our children.

Volunteers and students are not permitted to have unsupervised access to the children. The volunteers and students will be supervised by a designated employee at all times. They are not permitted to be left alone with any child. Volunteers, students and agency staff who may be working in the classroom, but they are not counted in the adult: child ratios.

Volunteers and students will have an orientation with the Supervisor and their designated staff member prior to their start date. They will go over all the policies and procedures and must sign off that they will abide by them at all times. We believe that if a volunteer or student is interested in becoming a part of The Family Place, they should be immersed in the daily routines of the programs. **Volunteers and co-op students are not permitted to partake in any bathroom or diapering routines.** ECE students are permitted as this is part of their learning process from their College or University; again they will never be left alone with any child.

### **Parents**

We consider ourselves very fortunate to be able to be a part of your family's lives. We believe that families are the experts on their own children. We look towards a

partnership, working together to enhance your child's growth and development during the most important years in his or her life. To do this, we require daily open communication, as we can best support our little ones if we are apprised of any changes in the household. We encourage all families to communicate with our staff daily regarding their children's health. This allows our staff the ability to support each child's emotional and physical needs. We believe this partnership supports the whole child.

We connect with families through several planned family events held at the centres throughout the year. The Supervisors share their quarterly Newsletter through email, which gives parents updates of our programming and events within the centre. We post important notices of upcoming events, PD days and community information for parents on the Parent Board, located in the front hallways of both centres. Our website is updated by a volunteer from the Board as pertinent information for both centres is identified.

We have an open-door policy, where parents are encouraged to talk to their classroom educators and offer feedback to the centre Supervisor and Executive Director. We have a wealth of knowledge in child development along with connections to our local community partners: Heritage Glen Public School, Bishop Reding Catholic Secondary School, Halton Region, THRC, and Quality First. Students who are enrolled in the Early Childhood Educators program at several local colleges have placements at each centre, enabling them to gain hands-on experience in the field. This benefits the centres by bringing in new ideas, and also allows the centres to assess potential employees.

The policies and procedures that govern our programs can be found on our website. Our times of operation and an outline of our programs are listed in our Parent Handbook, which is also found on our website.

Our staff respects and values input from parents, whom we encourage to be part of the decision-making process for their child. The Family Place supports families by consulting with all professionals who are involved with them and their child. We believe in a team effort to support the entire family.

### **Implementation and Review of Policies, Procedures and Individualized Plans (A09)**

The Family Place will ensure that all policies and procedures are implemented and kept current at each centre. All staff, volunteers, students and outside agencies working with our children will be required to read the policies and procedures prior to commencing

work/educational placement, and thereafter, annually and whenever there is a change in any policy and procedure.

At the Family Place, we believe that any person working with our children should be implementing all our policies, procedures and individualized plans daily.

The Board of Directors review and approve all policies prior to being uploaded onto our website. The Executive Director creates edits or reviews the policies along with the Supervisor's input. Four policies are placed on the agenda for our monthly Board of Directors meetings, where a discussion of the content is reviewed. A copy of the approved policies is placed in the office, along with the Policy Sign-Off form which lists the specific policies approved. The staff are instructed to read the policies, and sign that they will abide by the policies. The Policy Sign-Off form is then kept in the Policy binder in the centre, along with the updated policies. Parents will be informed of the edited or new policy through email.

Staff will review policies throughout the year during individual centre and joint staff meetings. The Executive Director and Supervisor will choose which policies are reviewed, depending on questions or concerns surrounding different policies. Staff will sign off on the policies that are covered at each meeting.

## **Individualized Plans**

Anaphylaxis and Medical Plan:

Each individual Anaphylaxis and Medical plan will be reviewed by the Centre Supervisor with staff, volunteers and students (excluding high school students working towards their community hours), as to the parents' specific instructions and the centre's plan. The staff, volunteers and students (excluding high school students working towards their community hours) will sign the back of the original plan prior to commencing work/educational placement, and thereafter, annually or whenever there is a change.

The original plans are kept in the office, where a copy is posted in the child's classroom, and (kitchen and serving area for Anaphylaxis plans) and in the emergency contact classroom binder, to ensure this form is with the child at all times.

All staff, volunteers and students (excluding high school students working towards their community hours) review this form familiarizing themselves with the child, their

allergens, symptoms and medical needs. The form is reviewed by the parents annually, prior to the expiry date of the epi-pen.

Individual Program Plan:

Each child's Individual Program Plan is prepared by the Resource Consultant. All staff, volunteers and students (excluding high school students working towards their community hours) are to review and sign off on the Program Plan, annually and whenever there are changes. The sign-off sheet will be placed in the Individual Program Plan binder.

### **Compliance and Contraventions** (See A17 - Progressive Discipline Policy)

The Supervisors have a daily presence in each of the classrooms. They are aware of the educator's abilities, and observe compliance of the policies, procedures, individual plans and/or Program Statement at The Family Place. If an employee of THE FAMILY PLACE violates company policies, procedures, individualized plans and/or Program Statement, they will follow our Progressive, multi-step disciplinary process.

Typically, progressive discipline proceeds through these steps:

1. Coaching (informal);
2. Verbal warning (formal);
3. First written warning (formal);
4. Final written warning with possible suspension (formal); and
5. Termination.

With each violation or apparent problem, the employee will be provided with a written document to alert them of the problem and, if applicable, provide a copy of the company policy being violated; advise them of the consequences for further infractions; and suggest a method for improvement.

Annually, the Supervisors evaluate the staff on their performance: Areas of Attendance, Trainings, Program Development, Relationships, Supervision, Health and Safety, Leadership, Contribution to the Organization and Administration. These topics cover the internal policies, procedures and individualized plans. Strengths and needs are discussed and then goals and strategies are set by the Supervisor and the staff member. A timeline is noted and a meeting is set to discuss the progress.

### **Inclusion Policy (PR26)**

The Family Place strongly believes that every child is an individual and is unique. We work diligently to ensure we offer an inclusive environment where children of all abilities are treated with respect and dignity. All children have equal access to and participate in our meaningful programs. All children's abilities are considered and needs are met so each child can develop to their fullest potential. See the full policy on our website.

### **Wait List, Admissions, Withdrawal Policy (PR04)**

The Family Place maintains a wait list when there are no spots available or for a future spot in a program. Parents are encouraged to place their child's name on the waitlist which can be completed on our website. These forms are date and time stamped to ensure fairness when filling spots. The Supervisor will review the Wait List book once a spot opens up, contacting the parent on a first come, first served basis depending upon the available space and to match the age of the child in the correct program. See our full policy on our website.

### **Hours of Operation (PR02)**

The Family Place operates to provide service to parents who need child care Monday through Friday during the daytime.

**Hours** have been established to meet the needs of the majority of parents while still maintaining the financial viability of the centres. The centres are open for child care children and school-age children from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, all year long, except for statutory holiday closures and additional closures approved by the Family Place Board.

**Statutory Holiday Closures:** The centres close for the Statutory Holidays listed below: Parents are informed of these dates on their child's monthly calendar and also on the centre's Parent Bulletin Board.

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

### **Winter Break (Christmas to New Year's Day):**

The school-age program closes for the winter break as outlined by the HDSB school break closure.

The child care centres close at 2 p.m. on Christmas Eve when it falls on a weekday. When Christmas Eve falls on a weekend, the centre will close at 2 p.m. on the Friday prior.

The Family Place child care centres are closed from Christmas to New Year's Day, inclusive. At the discretion of the board, if New Year's Day falls on a weekend, the closure may extend to the following Monday. The Board of Directors will make this decision once HDSB and HCDSB have approved and published their annual calendar.

**Inclement Weather:** The centres may need to close for inclement weather or where safety cannot be assured. Parents will be notified to pick up their child if closure occurs during the day. If closure occurs after hours, parents are asked to listen to local media for closures of the Halton District School Board (Oakville centre) or Halton Catholic District School Board (Milton centre). The centres are required to follow school board closures. See Inclement Weather Policy (PR8) for more detailed information.

## **Fee Policy (PR12) – Fees are located on the website**

### Billing

Parents will be charged for every enrolled day of the year, including statutory holidays, sick days, vacation days, and any closures due to inclement weather. The only exceptions will be if the Board of Directors approves additional holiday closures (outside of statutory holidays).

With Board permission, a statutory holiday may be moved to create a long weekend. Parents will receive written notice in September of each year. This would apply, in most cases, only to Canada Day.

Although The Family Place is a non-profit organization, child care fees must be charged to cover the reasonable expenses of the business. Fees are subject to change.

### Fee Payment

Fees will be set annually by the Board of Directors. Parents will be notified of any change in writing. There is no registration fee at The Family Place.

As of September 1, 2019, we are only offering e-transfer as the form of payment. Cash and cheque is not permitted.

### **E-Transfers Instructions –**

- Add Contact – [sandravieira@thefamilyplacechildcare.com](mailto:sandravieira@thefamilyplacechildcare.com)
- Notify by: Email
- Include your child's full name and centre (Oakville or Milton). We have no way of referencing the e-transfer back to you without your child's full name and the centre your child attends
- Your email address – Full name and email address
- We have arranged for auto deposit, where there is no need for a password

Security Deposit - Parents are required to pay 10 days of fees upon registration. Where one month withdrawal notice is given, this deposit will be reimbursed to the family once the account is clear. Security Deposits will not be returned to families who register their child and who do not start their child at the centre. If a subsidized client's situation changes, adjustments will be required. These cheques will be deposited upon receipt.

### Payment Due

Parents are invoiced monthly. The invoice reflects the month each child is currently attending the centre. All fees must be dated for and placed in the fee box, no later than the 15th of each month. A late fee of \$50 will be incurred on each payment date or received after the 15th of the month.

### Late Pick-up Fee

A fee will be set by the Board and charged to the parents if a child is picked up past our closing time of 6 p.m. Parents must exit the centre prior to 6:00 p.m. with their child. After 6:00 p.m., a late fee of \$30.00 will be charged for every 15 minutes or part thereof that the parent is late.

The charge will be per family not per child. It will be invoiced to the family on their next month's invoice.

The late parent will be required to sign the Late Book.

-In the **Oakville centre**, the time of pick-up will be determined by the satellite clock located in the centre. This time will be recorded on the Late Pick-up Book.

-In the **Milton centre**, the time of pick-up will be determined by the Supervisor's computer, linked to the keypad.

The amount of the Late Pickup Fee will be paid directly to the staff who stayed late through petty cash. Parents, who are late picking their child up, three times within a ninety day period, will be contacted by the Supervisor, to discuss alternate pick-up persons. If the child is picked up late, three times after the new arrangement, child care could be terminated.

## **Financial Policy (A18)**

Child care fees are set according to the ongoing operational costs, are reviewed annually or on an "as-needed" basis, are due on a regular schedule, and are paid by (electronic funds transfer (EFT)).

The major source of child care funding required to keep the programs operating are client/parent fees. Fees are usually increased on an annual basis and parents/clients will be notified two months prior to the increase of fees.

Child care fees are charged for all days that children are enrolled in our programs including vacation, regardless of the children's attendance. Fees are not adjusted, refunded, or credited

for statutory holidays, absence due to illness, withdrawal without proper notice, or any other reason.

In the event of a circumstance that restricts our ability to access the premises/school (e.g. Ministry of Education or Board of Health closures), fees will remain in effect.

All parents will receive a tax receipt by the end of February for the previous year. Receipts are sent out in the name of the parent or parents who made the payments. It is the responsibility of parents to inform the Supervisor before the end of the year of any financial or legal situations that may impact the name on the receipt. In the event that further letters, receipts, or other documents or copies are required, fees may apply for the preparation of these documents.

Families may qualify for a partial or full government subsidy for child care services through Halton Region that is directed from guidelines set out by the province. The region determines the eligibility using an income test. More information to follow on the Canada Wide Early Learning Child Care Agreement.

Non-payment or delinquent payment of fees will be referred to the Board of Directors for action and may result in the loss of your child's enrolment in the child care. If there are circumstances beyond your control that you become aware of, please let us know as soon as possible.

## **Police Vulnerable Sector Check Policy (PR12)**

According to the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA), all employees, volunteers, students over 18 years of age and any person offering services to The Family Place are required to have a current Police Vulnerable Sector Check (PVSC) prior to working or providing services at The Family Place. See the full policy on our website.

## **Communication**

An open door policy exists at the centres, meaning that parents are welcome to drop by anytime. We also encourage parents to talk to the staff as much as possible, to bring them up to date on family happenings, their child's situation or to ask questions about their time with us. Occasionally, demands in the classroom make it difficult to have a lengthy conversation at that particular time, so parents may wish to request that the educator call them later or you may set up a meeting to talk at a more convenient time. Any concerns, of course, may be brought to the attention of the Supervisor and/or Executive Director.

Written communication with families from the centre will be passed along either through the educators, left at their child's cubby or through email. General information may be accessed on our website [www.thefamilyplacechildcare.com](http://www.thefamilyplacechildcare.com). Any information that a parent wishes to distribute needs to be approved by the Centre Supervisor, before it can go out.

## **Partnerships**

It is important for everyone at The Family Place to understand the role of partnership that exists at our centres. A strong relationship between the families and staff members contributes to high

quality care for the children. Establishing and maintaining a relationship that is based on mutual respect is the responsibility of both parents and staff. We have several mechanisms in place to share information, like the Daily Log Book, but mutual respect comes from an acceptance that we are partners in the care of these children. Your input and feedback are important to us. We will endeavour to adapt the program, where possible, around the family's needs and concerns.

### **Dismissal Policy (PR32)**

The Family Place endeavours to meet the needs of all the families registered in its programs. Before a family is asked to leave our centre, we will set up strategies that meet the needs of the centre, classroom, staff, and family. We must at all times consider the needs of all the children and staff in our centre. In all cases, we will try our best to connect families to agencies for the support needed. Unfortunately, there are times when the needs of the family cannot be met. When such situations arise, the family will be asked to leave. See the full policy on our website

### **Parent Issues and Concerns (PR39)**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians and the child care staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns. The Family Place believes effective communication is important to the provision of quality child care within a professional setting. For this reason, in the event of a controversial child care issue, established lines of communication will be followed by Board and Staff members. This ensures consistent, accurate and appropriate responses. See the full policy on our website.

### **Emergency Management (PR40)**

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear direction for staff and management to follow when responding to emergency situations. The procedures set out steps for staff to follow to support the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved. Clear policies and procedures will support all individuals to manage responses and responsibilities during an emergency, resulting in the safest outcomes possible. See the full policy on our website.

## **Chapter Two: Health, Safety and Routines**

### **Child's Illness Policy (PR17) - see Covid policies during pandemic**

When a child becomes ill during his or her day at the child care, staff must determine the severity of the child's illness, the effects on the other children and the action that is needed. Our children's best interests are always foremost in the educator's decision process. We encourage everyone to make sure they have an alternate plan for their care if they become ill. See the full policy on our website.

## Outside Play

Our playgrounds are inclusive, set-up to support all our children's abilities. In Milton, we have a separate play area for the Infants with artificial grass and sandbox. The Toddler and Preschool playground has two climbing structures, a bike path, sand box and an artificial grassed area for building and reading.

Outside Play is a very important part of our program. Weather permitting, Infants, Toddlers and Preschool children go outside for about an hour in the morning and again in the afternoon. The School Age programs will go outside for at least 30 minutes each day. The educators will make the decision for their particular group, based on experience and training. Consideration as to the circumstances at their location and the time of day will be taken into account. The guidelines set out by the Public Health will be considered. Play times may be shortened in extreme conditions.

If your child is well enough to attend child care, he or she will be expected to go outside. Outside play, when your child is dressed for the conditions, is part of a healthy lifestyle. Fresh air and exercise contribute to the well-being of any person, and is an integral part of our program.

## What to Wear

When you arrive in the morning, please have your child dressed for outside play, if your arrival occurs during your child's normal outside time. Once the rest of the group is ready it is difficult for an educator to be able to hold the whole group so that they can dress one child.

Always alert the educator to your child's arrival. Children must never be left unattended in the classroom, halls or playgrounds—regardless of age.

Children need to wear clothes in child care that allow them freedom to move about and have the independence of being able to dress themselves when appropriate. Jogging suits, pants with loose waistbands and easy-to-fasten closures are the best. Watch a group and see the confidence of a child who needs little adult assistance. One piece outfits, with zippers in the back or overalls with tight fasteners, frustrate a child who wants so much to "do it myself".

Each child, regardless of age, needs a change of clothes. Infants and Toddlers should have at least two complete outfits. Older children spill juice or slip in a puddle and need to be dry in their own clothes. If you are running low and haven't topped up, you will find a reminder note on your child's cubby. Please bring the change of clothes the next day. If your child does wear "Family Place" clothes home, please launder and return them as soon as possible. We have **few** extras.

Shoes are required and should have non-marking rubber soles. Party shoes are lovely but are too slippery for safe play and will not be allowed in the school gyms. Slippers do not provide

enough support or traction for safe running and jumping. Outside, children need strong footwear that is seasonable, warm and dry. "Crocs" are not acceptable for outside play.

The winter brings many challenges to the child care centres. Please help us by assuring that your child has a snow suit that fits with extra room, warm boots, a hat that covers their ears, and at least two pairs of waterproof mitts. Scarves or string on outside clothing are not permitted by the Board of Health. Neck warmers make an excellent substitute for scarves. Remember we go out every day, so please make sure your child is prepared for the weather.

Summer clothing needs to be considered carefully as well. Shorts and tee shirts, sun hats worn with a large enough brim to shade their face and ears, a jacket or sweater for chilly mornings and sturdy footwear are the ideal. Sandals fill with gravel and leave toes open for stubbing. No flip flops.

### **Sleep Safety Policy (PR33)**

The Sleep Safety Policy is to ensure that all our children are supervised during their sleep time. This policy and procedure will be available on our website for parents to view prior to registering with The Family Place. During the enrollment process, the Supervisor will review with the parent(s), the child's sleeping arrangements and then throughout their child care at The Family Place. We will make the necessary changes within the guidelines of the Ministry of Education and within The Family Place Guidelines.

### **Drop-off and Pick-up**

Children do best when they have a routine. Coming to the centre and being picked up at the same time each day is important. Even the Infants are aware of the routine times, and expect their parents at the same time each day. Older children are very aware and find it difficult to adjust to varying schedules. For this reason, we ask you to let us know if you are dropping your child off or picking up at a different time than usual.

**Schedules** - Our staff provide high quality programming throughout the day in many forms. The more formal programming ( new cognitive concepts) are introduced between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., with small group circles. We ask that parents drop off their children no later than 9:00 a.m. to ensure their children get the most of this special time prior to the classrooms going outside at 10:00 a.m.

In Milton, we ask that children in the Infant arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. in the morning. This allows them to settle in the playroom before lunch routine begins. Infants will not be accepted after 10:30 without the Supervisor's approval.

**Appointments** - Lunch is served between 11:15 - 11:30 a.m depending on the classroom. Washroom routine and naptime/rest time is scheduled between 12:00 to 2:30 p.m. Children sleep during this time, and it is very disruptive to these children when a child is brought into the program during this time. As per the CCEYA, ratios change to allow staff to have their lunch

breaks during this time period. Parents, whose children have appointments throughout the daytime, need to be picked up before 11:15 a.m. and can return after 2:30 p.m. when sleep time is over. This ensures that all children are given the ability to have the best rest they can, to be ready for the afternoon programming of consolidating skills and reviewing on-going concept development.

**Staffing** - The staffing of the centres is based on the number of children in attendance. When your child hasn't arrived by their usual time and we have not heard from you, staff assignments may be re-organized to better meet the needs of the whole centre. Therefore, please notify the centre by 9:00 a.m. of absence or a change in normal arrival time.

**Emergency Contact** - We require the name, address and telephone number of a **local** alternate. This person will be called to pick up your child if necessary, if we cannot contact you. Your alternate must bring Photo Identification when picking up your child.

If you send someone else to pick-up your child, you must inform the centre of the name of the person prior to pick-up. They will need to show photo identification. The name the parent gives us will be matched to the id. **No child will be dismissed to anyone other than their parent without photo identification and confirmation from the parent.**

### **Saying Good-bye, Still Saying Good-bye - changes due to Covid**

The first few days will be a trying time for children and their families, but as the children realize that their parents will be back and that they have a busy and happy day ahead, they settle in and those good-byes get easier. For you parents it is not as easy. You may have left a crying child who will be tired and cranky at pick-up time. For you, it seems like a very sad situation..... envisioning your poor child, crying all day. What you haven't seen is the laughing and sharing, the joyful time during the day. Please rest assured, we will let you know if your child is unhappy. Relax and go about your day and call part way through, if you wish; we are happy to let you know how things are going and will be honest with you.

As time goes on, most children say good-bye comfortably but some still have a bit of trouble with their parents leaving. For these children, a prolonged good-bye only emphasizes the present sadness. You may think you are giving them extra comfort by staying longer or coming back for a second hug or kiss. If your child continues to fuss over a long period of time, you may need to do a reassuring but quick good-bye, allowing the child to become involved and busy more quickly. Remember it takes about 2 – 3 weeks to adjust to a new surrounding or event, this is for the child and the parents. Our staff has many years of experience in saying good-bye, they will be happy to give you some helpful hints along the way.

### **Home Time (PR12)**

Your child will be excited to see you at the end of the day, but they are tired. They have had many experiences throughout the day that they want to share with you. Try to leave some time to spend with your child to look at their classroom and the white board which outlines the children's development. Take a moment and speak with the educator about their day.

The centres close at 6:00 p.m. This is a policy established by the Board of Directors. It is important that parents arrive with sufficient time to have their child organized to be out of the centre by 6:00 p.m. Try to arrive at the centre by 5:50 p.m. to allow your child the time to have a relaxing pick-up, starting your evening on a positive note. There is a late fee charged for anyone leaving the centre after 6:00 p.m.

## **Food in the centre – See Nutrition Policy (PR28) and Anaphylaxis Policy (PR27)**

**PLEASE DO NOT bring food or drinks from home, unless:**

- The food or drink is required for medical reasons allergies-noted in the child's file
- Your child is too young to be on table food
- Cultural reasons
- The food is for nutrition breaks at Heritage Glen School and will remain in a sealed container while at the centre.

**All these exceptions must be discussed and approved by the Supervisor/Executive Director**

These restrictions are necessary as we have young children, who may have been identified with an allergy or we have very young children who may have unidentified allergies and it is important that we know exactly what each child has eaten during their day with us. We also try to keep our centres as clean as possible and food in their cubbies attracts bugs.

## **Items from Home - changes due to Covid**

Please discourage your child from bringing toys from home. They can get lost or broken and can create jealousy among the children. There is more than sufficient equipment and activities at the centres for all to have a wide variety with which to play. Several of the age groups have regular “show and share”, and can then bring one item from home. **Guns, war toys and any toy of destruction should never be brought to the centres.**

## **Day Trips – Off Premise Policy (PR31) - changes due to Covid**

The Family Place believes that our children can bridge their exploration of the world around them by going on local walks around our neighbourhoods. We walk to parks, stores, community buildings, and splash pads, and go on field trips throughout the year.

We are lucky enough to have the opportunity to use splash pads near both our locations. There is no standing water at the splash pads.

We typically take a few field trips each year that require children to be bused. We accept parents on these trips, but they are never counted in the ratio. Parents are not allowed to supervise any children other than their own. It is up to the parents' discretion if they wish to drive their child to the facility or pick them up. We would need to be aware of this ahead of time,

due to numbers on the bus. Children do not pay for entrance fees or bus fees. If parents want to join us, it is their responsibility to pay for their entrance fee. See our full policy on our website.

## Chapter Three: Community Involvement

### **Students**

Part of the multi-generational approach of our centres, is the offering of our programs for students for both high schools and colleges in the area. High School students complete their Co-op placements and their volunteer hours at the centres. Colleges request placements for their students registered in Early Childhood Education Programs. We welcome the fresh new ideas these students bring.

### **School Community**

Being located within two beautiful schools, both centres have the ability to access school facilities. At Bishop Reding Secondary School, the children are involved with the Parenting class, as well as, using the school gyms when available.

Since Heritage Glen is an elementary setting and many of our children attend both, interaction between the centre and the school is more frequent. We share special events, space and are involved in the Kindergarten programs.

The Supervisors have worked very hard with the School Administration, educators, custodians and the School Board. Being attached to the schools does lend to some compromises on our part. Please support us in respecting the relationship we have built with both schools.

### **Quality First**

The Family Place participates in a developmental model in quality improvement in Halton Region, [www.thrc.ca/quality-first](http://www.thrc.ca/quality-first). This initiative provides all licensed child care programs within Halton with this opportunity. Their mission statement is to facilitate positive, meaningful and sustained change in the design and delivery of quality child care and learning.

The Family Place holds the highest level of quality, a Level 3. Throughout the year, the centres evaluate the environment, themselves through self-reflection, and the child to educator relationships, as well as, workshops for professional development. The Quality First representative visits the centres a few times a year, supporting the centre, evaluating the programs.

## Chapter Four – Bishop Reding – Location - Milton

### **Programs**

The capacity of our new Milton child care centre is limited by the license issued by the Ministry of Education, through square footage of the centre.

10 Infants	from 3 to 18 months
15 Toddlers	from 18 months to 2 1/2 years
15 Toddlers	from 18 months to 2 1/2 years
24 Preschool	from 2 1/2 years to 3.8 years

Children enrol within the appropriate age group. It is the policy of The Family Place to have children move up to the next age group, based on age, developmental readiness, and **space availability in the group**. Children can move to the next group only when a space is available; we cannot exceed the group size listed above. Where there is no space, the child will remain in the younger group, and the educators will support the next stage of their development until the spot becomes available.

### **Infant Feeding Schedule**

We are required to have written feeding instructions from parents of children under 12 months of age. The Family Place provides Homo milk and the meals are catered from Food for Tots. All other food for your Infant is supplied by you. Please label all containers and bottles. Update, in writing, your child's feeding schedule when changes occur. See full Nutrition Policy (PR28) on our website.

### **Diapering and Toilet Training**

For the children that are in diapers, we ask parents to supply disposable diapers, creams and diaper wipes. If each child their own diaper wipes, we can further protect the hygienic changing of your child.

In the Toddler Room, the parents and the educator's will begin to look for signs of toilet readiness. They need to be able to go a length of time with a dry diaper, show interest in using the toilet and be able to pull their pants up and down. Loose clothing is essential to make it easier for the children to manage. Please bring numerous clothes and shoes for changing – there WILL be accidents. Once your wee one is ready for toilet training, you will be a big part of the exercise by following through with your child in underwear when at home. Children go to Preschool toilet training.

### **Cubbies**

Each child has their own "cubby", a place in the hall to hang their coat and a shelf for their things. Notes and invoices are hung above your child's cubby. Your child's very precious art work will go in their cubby. They have worked hard on this art, please take it home regularly.

## **Rest Time**

Children enjoy having a soft, cuddly stuffed animal and a blanket from home for rest time and we encourage you to bring them in. We do have sufficient bedding for all the children. Soothers are discouraged for both Toddler and Preschoolers.

The Family Place strives to accommodate parent's preferences during sleep time. In our Sleep Safety Policy, we outline that Supervisors will discuss with parents their child's sleep preference prior to starting at the centre and whenever there is a transition into another classroom.

Please keep in mind that we must follow the Ministry guidelines at all times. The Family Place will accommodate to the best of our ability keeping within the confines of the classroom design, the needs of the other children in the sleep room and the staffing ratios that must be adhered to for the entirety of the day. We will work with families the best we can. Please understand that there are many variables that go on during this 2 hour sleep period.

Infants sleep on their own schedules or after lunch as they begin to get ready to move to the Toddler room. Each Infant has his or her own crib. A blanket from home comforts them for sleep time. Soothers are kept for sleep time, as much as possible. It is difficult in the playroom to make sure soothers are not shared between friends. The educators in the sleep room must do a physical check of all the Infants in 15 minute intervals. This is recorded in the child's file.

## **Gates/Doors**

For your child's safety, we ask that all gates and doors be opened and closed by an adult. Please encourage your children to let "mommies, daddies or educators" open them. This is for their own safety. This becomes a habit and helps create a safe environment.

**The Family Place is a family, supporting each other, making it a wonderful and positive environment for children, families, and staff. Please come join us at The Family Place. We look forward to having your family as part of our family.**

You can find all of our policies on our website at [www.thefamilyplacechildcare.com](http://www.thefamilyplacechildcare.com).

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