



The Family Place

Oakville Parent Handbook

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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

1.1 History

The Family Place was the brain child 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 over-whelmed with our acceptance and learned so much from creative school-age staff and elementary teachers.

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.

1.2 Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is a group of individuals, who represent the community interests in the programs at the centres. Anyone may seek nomination to the Board. Parents are encouraged to be active on the Board or on one of the committees acting on behalf of the Board.

The board meets every month, taking a break over the summer. Meetings are held alternately at the Milton or Oakville centres. Generally, the meetings last about two hours. 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.

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.

1.3 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.”

1.4 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 believes 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 current with the Ministry of Education's *Child Care Early Years Act*. Our staff is trained in the new 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 teachers 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 Teacher

Our teachers 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 teachers observe the children throughout their day. The teachers talk with children, listening and expanding on the children's interests. The teachers 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 teachers 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 teachers add to the boards the children's statements, their work, and pictures of the children engaged in activities. This documentation is not only for teachers 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 teachers take pictures of their boards and file them in a binder for future use. The teachers 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 teacher/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 teachers 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 teachers 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 teacher/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 are 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 gives children more time with a teacher.
- **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 judgements** – Are we emotionally open, do we support in the classroom from peers, are we free from judgement, 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 are 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.

Children attending The Family Place in Oakville are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Behaviour adopted at Heritage Glen Public School since the child care centre is located in and participates with the elementary school.

Code of Student Behaviour - <http://hgp.hdsb.ca/behaviour>

Workplace Violence and Harassment and Sexual Harassment and Violence

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 presents 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 on 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 signing 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's 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:

- 1.steps to reduce exposure to the agent or situation,
- 2.description of medical devices and instructions
- 3.procedures to be followed in event of reaction or medical emergency
- 4.description of supports available to your child
- 5.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 are 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. Teachers 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 teachers, 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.

MPP Indira Naidoo-Harris has visited the Milton centre several times, announcing the Provincial government's financial commitment to increased child care spaces in Ontario. Indira's son attended The Family Place in the Milton centre.

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 teachers 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.

1.4 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. Parent will be informed of the edited or new policy through email.

Annually, staff are given an opportunity to critique the policies and procedures prior to an organization wide Policy staff meeting. At the meeting, each policy and procedure is displayed, where staff can voice their opinions. The Supervisors and Executive Director will discuss the changes and will decide if they are applicable. If there are no changes, the staff and supply staff will sign off on the Policy Sign-Off form during that meeting. If there are significant changes, the Executive Director will forward the changes to the Board President. The changes will be reviewed at the next Board meeting. The edited policies and procedures will be placed in the office for the staff to reread and sign off on again.

Annually, The Board of Directors will be instructed to read all the policies and procedures and sign the Policy Sign-Off form. This will be placed in the Milton Policy binder.

Individualized Plans

Anaphylaxis and Medical Plan:

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

The original plans are kept in the office, where a copy is posted in the child's classroom, (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 review this form familiarizing themselves with the child, their allergens, symptoms and medical needs. The form is reviewed by the parents annually,

Individual Program Plan:

Each child's Individual Program Plan is prepared by the Resource Consultant. All staff, volunteers and students are to review and sign off on the Program Plan, annually and whenever there are changes. The sign-off sheet will be placed Individual Program Plan binder.

Compliance and contraventions

The Supervisors have a daily presence in each of the classrooms. They are aware of the teacher's abilities, and observe compliance of all the policies, procedures, individual plans and/or Program Statement at The Family Place. If the Supervisor or Executive Director sees anyone not abiding by the policies, procedures, individualized plans and/or Program Statement:

1. **First Incident** -The Supervisor would address the noncompliance immediately, supporting the person through the correction by reviewing the document and discussing the area of concern.
2. **Second Incident** - The Supervisor will meet with the person, reviewing the correct steps, and setting out a plan that the individual will need to follow. This meeting would be documented in the person's file using the Staff Incident report (written documentation).
3. **Third Incident** - The Supervisor will advise the person that they are required to attend a workshop to support their learning (if applicable) and/or they will be paired up with a mentor to support their ongoing plan of action. A meeting will be set with the individual either daily or weekly to review their progress up to one month.
4. **Final Incident** - If the individual does not show signs of significant improvement or does not co-operate with the support given to them during this process, they could face termination of employment. The final step of dismissal will be determined by the Executive Director in conjunction with the Board President. Documentation of all steps will be kept in the staff's file. Depending on the severity of an incident, the Executive Director may proceed directly to the final step, without the intervening steps.

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 regulated 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.

1.5 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.

1.6 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 group in the room. See our full policy on our website.

1.7 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 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.

The Family Place Board will approve any changes or additions to the Holiday Closures listed below in September of each year, and a notice will be sent to parents at that time specifying any changes. School-age closures may differ from the centre closures and will be noted accordingly.

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
Family Day
Thanksgiving Day
Boxing Day

Victoria Day
Good Friday
Civic Holiday

Labour Day
Canada Day
Christmas Day

Winter Break: The Milton centre closes at 2:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve when it falls on a weekday. When Christmas Eve falls on a weekend, the centre will close at 2:00 p.m. on the Friday prior. As noted above, the Family Place Board may close the centres on additional days over winter break and will communicate this to parents in September of every year. **If open** on December 31, the centres will close at 4:00 p.m.

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 follow school board closures. See Inclement Weather Policy (PR8) for more detailed information.

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).

Procedure

Statutory holidays will be taken on the day designated unless they fall on a weekend. Parents will be notified in writing in September of each year, as to the day of closure when a statutory holiday falls on a weekend.

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.

1.8 Fee Policy (PR12)

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

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| Infant Program | \$75.35 per day |
| Toddler Program | \$64.75 per day |
| Preschool Program | \$53.85 per day |

Procedure

- 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.
- Method of Payment – As of September 1, 2019, we are offering e-transfer, cheque and money orders as a form of payment. Cheques or money order are payable to The Family Place and placed in the fee box outside the respective offices. Cash is not permitted due to a liability issue.

•E-Transfers Instructions –

-Add Contact – sandravieira@thefamilyplacechildcare.com

-Notify by: Email

-Message – You must include your child's full name and centre (Oakville or Milton) in this area. We will 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 dated or received after the 15th of the month.

•NSF Cheques - A fee of \$20.00 will be charged to the parent for NSF cheques. The cheque replacing a NSF cheque must be certified or a money order.

•Late Pick-up Fee –

1. 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 \$25.00 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.

2. 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.

3. The amount of the Late Pickup Fee will be paid directly to the staff who stayed late through petty cash.

4. Parents who are late three times in picking up their child within a period of one month, will be sent a letter by the Executive Director and/or Supervisor. The child care could be terminated.

1.9 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.

1.10 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 teacher 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 teachers, left at their child's cubby or through email. General information may be accessed on our website www.thefamilyplacechildcare.com. Any information that a parent wishes to distribute needs to be approved by the Centre Supervisor, before it can go out.

1.11 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 the 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 family's needs and concerns.

1.12 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 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

1.13 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.

1.14 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

2.1 Child's Illness Policy (PR17)

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 teacher'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.

2.2 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 teachers 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 life style. Fresh air and exercise contribute to the well-being of any person, and is an integral part of our program.

2.3 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 a teacher to be able to hold the whole group so that they can dress one child.

Always alert the teacher 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 in 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 snowsuit 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.

2.4 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.

2.5 Daily Log Book

Each classroom has a "Sign in and Out" Book. Parents are required to enter the time their child arrived and the time they departed the centre. Depending on the age of your child, you may be asked about their amount of sleep the night before. There is always a place for you to note any messages for the teachers, such as a change in pick-up, medications or even a relative visiting. For all the children, except the school age, the teachers will comment on lunch and nap time, as well as commenting on how the child's day has gone. You will also find Incident Sheets and Accident Forms in this binder. Notes from your child's teacher will be left in their folder in the binder.

2.6 Arrival and Pick-up

Children do best when they have 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.

Our mornings are the time when most of the new cognitive concepts are introduced. The afternoon is a time for consolidating skills and reviewing on-going concept development. If your

child arrives later in the morning, they will miss a great deal, so if you can, please have your child here no later than 9:30 a.m.

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

The staffing of the child care 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 8 a.m. of absence or a change in normal arrival time.*

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 parent.**

2.7 Saying Good-bye, Still Saying Good-bye

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 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 re-assuring 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 have many years of experience in saying good-bye, they will be happy to give you some helpful hints along the way.

2.8 Home Time

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 teacher 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. **SEE 1.9**

- 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. The Family Place goes by our clock in the centres. The fee is \$20.00 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 the following month.

- Parents are invoiced for the Late Pick-up fee.

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

- Parents who are late three times in picking up their child within a period of one month will be sent a letter by the Executive Director and/or Supervisor. We will ask parents to find an alternate person to pick-up your child. If the late pick-ups continue, child care could be terminated.

2.9 Food in the centre – See Nutrition Policy (PR28) and Anaphylaxis Policy (PR27) PLEASE DO NOT bring food or drink 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.

2.10 Things from Home

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.**

2.11 Day Trips – Off Premise Policy (PR31)

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 fee 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

3.1 Students

Part of the multi-generational approach of our centres, is the offering of our programs for student 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 Quality First

The Family Place participates in a developmental model in quality improvement in Halton Region, 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 teacher 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 –Heritage Glen – Location – Oakville Centre

4.1 Programs

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

- 15 Toddlers -from 18 months to 2 1/2 years
- 16 Preschool -from 2 1/2 years to 3.8 years
- JK/SK Before, After, Before and After, and PD Day School Program
-from 4 to 5 years of age
- School Age Program Before, After, Before and After, and PD Day School Programs
-from Grade 1 – Grade 5

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 teachers will support the next stage of their development until the spot becomes available.

4.2 Toilet Training

In the Toddler Room, the parent and the teacher'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 trained.

4.3 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

4.4 Rest Time

Children enjoy having a soft, cuddly stuffed animal and a blanket from home for rest time. We encourage families to provide these if their child requires one to rest. We do have sufficient bedding for all the children. Soothers are discouraged for both Toddler and Preschoolers.

The Family Place strives to accommodate parents 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 their 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.

4.5 Before and After Kindergarten and School Age Programs

These programs run from September to the end of June. We are fortunate to be linked to Heritage Glen Elementary School and have the ability to use their classrooms, facilities and playgrounds. These programs are known as SACC, (School Age Child Care).

Bagged lunches: On P.D. days and March Break, parents provide their child's lunch and The Family Place will provide snack. It is important that your child's lunch provides healthy food choices and of course, **NO PEANUTS OR TREE NUTS.** Children are discouraged from sharing food or drinks due to allergies and hygiene.

Simply by the nature of this program, certain things only apply to these children and their programs. Kindergarten and School Age child care is unique blending of care giving and letting go. The youngest in the program may be just under 4 years of age and the oldest in Grade 5. This is a huge gap in age, developmental stage, social understanding and expectations. Our teachers are very accomplished at adjusting these factors to provide a safe but “cool” program.

The children go outside for at least thirty minutes to an hour each day, weather permitting. They have a chance to play organized games, or just use the sports equipment with a group of friends. Some simply like to “hang with their buds”. Inside activities include snack, art, games and age appropriate activities to use in free-play. There is an area for children to work on homework but we do not insist on it being done at SACC. All groups enjoy activities at the various interest centres, which include Science, Construction, Books, Team activities and Art.

The Family Place is dedicated to the growth and development of a child's sense of independence and confidence. The children's safety is always the most important issue but we recognize that the SACC children are becoming ready for a certain amount of independence. Children in the older School Age groups have close supervision but may be allowed to move from one supervised area to another on their own. This means that your children may go to the washroom on their own. We ask them to go in pairs for increased safety.

Even though your child may go to school on their own, the Child Care Early Years Act requires an adult to accompany each child to their child care program. We ask that you walk with your child to the SACC classroom and sign them in for the morning and sign them out again in the afternoon. The SACC Programs follow Emergent Curriculum. The teachers and children document their activities. Take a look at the white boards located in their classrooms. The teachers appreciate your input about the program.

Please let us know in writing if your child has permission to go anywhere other than SACC after school. Staff will be in touch with you, if your child does not arrive as scheduled. Please make sure your telephone or cell numbers are current. Children need to be picked up by someone who is over 18 years of age and listed on your application form as authorized to pick-up.

4.6 School Age Behaviour Guidance

A final word needs to be said about Behaviour Guidance. We realize that our youngest school age group includes children in Junior and Senior Kindergarten. These children are just beginning to develop the social skills and self-confidence to manage their own behaviours. Our behaviour guidance practises take this into consideration, but we cannot allow any child to wilfully hurt another. The older group should be at the stage, when regular reminders support and supervision should be sufficient to curb all aggression. Our expectation is that these children can solve their own conflicts peacefully or seek adult support to do so. In case of inappropriate behaviours at any level, parents will be contacted and may be asked to pick up their child immediately. Each day starts with a clean slate. If there is a continued problem and the child, teachers or parents together cannot find a solution, the child may need to leave our care. We will try our very best to support your child and your family.

4.7 P.D. Days and School Holidays

Full day child care is available for all P.D. days and March Break. Parents of the Kindergarten and School Age programs MUST sign their children up for this additional service and full day fee will be invoiced.

At the beginning of each term, The Family Place will send out an email outlining the P.D. dates. Please mark these dates on your calendar, so your child can enjoy the interactive program developed specific for these dates. Parents have one month notice to sign their children up for the PD day. Parent email the centre to confirm their child's spot for the specific date. Two weeks prior to the date, all children signed up will be charged for the spot, whether they attend or not. This is to ensure we have the appropriate number of staff on hand for that day. Our experienced staff work in advance, planning new and exciting programs that support your children's interests for the full day.

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.

The Family Place - 905 469-0888

Wendy Wells - Supervisor

Sandra Vieira – Executive Director

Halton Region

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