



Educara Montessori Childcare Parent Handbook

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1. Welcome to Educara

Dear Parents:

The Supervisor and Staff welcome your child and family to our Intergenerational Centre. We look forward to having a wonderful and bilateral association with you. We have prepared this handbook so that you understand what you can expect from Educara and what we will expect of you.

Our practices are guided by the Child Care Early Years Act, the College of Early Childhood Educators' Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, How Does Learning Happen? And the Montessori approach to education as well as our Policies and Procedures.

Please be sure to read this handbook and sign all consent forms. If you have any questions or concerns, need further information, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be happy to help you.

Welcome to Educara!

Revision: 5 — Last modified: Dec 05, 2019

2. Program Statment

OVERVIEW

Educara (Barrhaven Campus), is a Montessori based childcare center operating in Ontario, Canada. Our location, within the same premises as the Barrhaven V!va retirement community, provides us with a unique opportunity for intergenerational participation.

While Montessori based, we fully embrace Ontario Government's approach to early childhood education. Our pedagogy modifies the Montessori philosophy by incorporating more play-based exploration and experiences and follows the principles set out in Ontario's How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH) document (The Government of Ontario, 2014). At Educara, we covet respect for all persons, cultures and view children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

The core of our approach to childcare is providing a safe, nurturing environment that promotes natural development through:

- Belonging: cultivation of authentic, caring relationships and connections creating a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
- Well-being: nurturing children's healthy development and supporting their growing sense of self. Rather than teaching, we firmly believe in guiding and following the child's natural curiosity.
- Engagement: providing an environment and experiences that engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.
- Expression: fostering communication and expression in all forms.

While organized around the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression, the Educara program is holistic, melding these separate foundations into a single experience developing the whole child.

ENGAGEMENT

"The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences."

— Maria Montessori

Another very important aspect of the Montessori philosophy is that of the prepared environment. The prepared environment is meant to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play, and inquiry. Everything that children come in contact with facilitates and maximizes independent learning and exploration. This is a calm, well-ordered environment that has a lot of movement and activity. Children are free to choose, play, and work on activities at their own pace, experiencing a combination of freedom and self-discipline, guided by the environment.

Our staff adheres to the concept that children must be free to explore and follow their natural interests, thereby developing their potential and increasing their knowledge of the world around them. Within the prepared environment, the child must experience the freedom of movement, freedom of exploration, freedom to interact socially, and freedom from interference from others. Most importantly the freedom of choice.

The Educara environment provides a wealth of interesting objects and open-ended materials for children to explore with their senses, manipulate, and investigate. The environment is designed to elicit curiosity, investigation, and provide challenges that are responsive to individual capabilities extending the boundaries of their learning. We also believe that we should use nature to inspire children. before is why natural materials are preferred in our environment. Real wood, reeds, bamboo, metal, cotton, and glass, are preferred to synthetics or plastics.

Child-size real objects are used throughout the environment. Furniture is child-size, so the child is not dependent on an adult for his movement. All tools and play objects such as rakes, hoes, pitchers, tongs, shovels should all fit children's hands and height, allowing children to use them without frustration.

Educara uses the environment as a microcosm of the world around us. Within this environment, the child begins to internalize the order and structure surrounding him, thus making sense of the world in which he lives. To ensure environments and experiences reflect and are relevant to children's everyday lives. Educara is committed to connecting with families and communities and inviting their participation in developing the environment.

We provide a social environment that promotes the freedom to interact, where children learn and are encouraged to develop a sense of compassion and empathy for others. The environment aims to optimize the development of social interaction, preparing children to engage and play in group settings.

The purpose of the Educara environment is to develop the whole personality of the child, not merely his intellect. By guiding the child through the five areas of the Montessori curriculum (Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics, and Cultural subjects), the child is immersed in an environment that is at the forefront of the creative work in our classrooms. Through developmentally appropriate, sensorial material that promotes play and inquiry and moves hierarchically from simple to complex and concrete to abstract, children are given the freedom to fully develop their unique potential and increasing awareness and understanding of key concepts, including those associated with literacy and numeracy.

Daily logs and semi-annual progress reports are the key means of documenting and making children's thinking, learning, and competence visible to children, families, and others. Further to these formal communications. Staff is encouraged to dialog with children and families daily.

EXPRESSION

Evolving into a good communicator begins with being allowed to express oneself. At Educara, we contend that effective communication is about respect, respecting each other's personality, and respecting each other's opinions. Further, communication should be reciprocal – When children experience being heard, they will also learn to listen.

Our programs provide effective, safe opportunities and experiences, giving children positive, reinforcing indicators that they are developing communication skills well, and becoming active members of the community.

Effective communication is not limited to, verbal interactions. Body language, gestures, and facial expressions are also part of the many “languages” children use to communicate. As professional caregivers, we recognize this and provide individualized support for children of all abilities to express themselves and be heard.

The Educara classroom is designed in such a way that all activities gear themselves naturally toward the development of the skills required for communication. Language development is supported in the classroom because of the freedom of conversation allowed to the children. In our environment, encouragement of self-expression is fostered through communication between children and their peers and children and adults. The expression is also improved by engaging and cultivating children’s interaction with stories and books in multiple situations and for a variety of purposes. Circle time, reading areas, appropriate materials, music, art, conversation, and many other activities enhance and support communication and expression daily. By keeping a record of children’s communication, we expand their understanding of previously expressed thoughts and ideas.

Throughout the Educara programs, we strive to include families and community members, finding ways to support and enrich the inclusion of varied language and culture. We welcome diversity.

Revision: 7 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

2.1. Belonging

Inclusiveness is a basic tenet of the Montessori philosophy. As such, Educara has created an environment that fosters inclusiveness and belonging in all aspects of its programs. Staff members engage in and support positive and open relationships and connections among children, parents, and the community. We promote peace and acceptance of diversity in peoples and cultures while respecting the individual.

Our hiring policy ensures that we employ professional Early Childhood educators who, as primary caregivers, support families, and understand the needs of each child as an individual.

At Educara, we also have a unique opportunity for children to belong to an intergenerational community. Children feel connectivity to a larger group of people that includes the elderly. Proven benefits of intergenerational programs include (United, Generations, 2007):

- Improved foundation for reading and related activities compared to their peers at other schools.
- Enhanced Social Skills: Interacting with older adults enables youth to develop social networks, communication skills, problem-solving abilities, positive attitudes towards aging, a sense of purpose, and community service.
- Promotes good self-esteem. Young children who interact with older adults in a co-located facility experienced higher personal and social development by 11 months compared to children in non-intergenerational facilities.
- Decreased Negative Behavior: Youth involved in intergenerational mentoring programs are 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol, and 52% less likely to skip school.
- Increased Stability: Children and youth gain positive role models with whom they can interact regularly. They develop many positive relationships with civic attitudes and behaviors, including volunteering habits, a sense of efficacy, and trust.

Revision: 6 — Last modified: Dec 05, 2019

2.2. Well Being

The well-being of children is extremely important to Educara. We provide a safe and nurturing environment, always maintaining the child to caregiver ratios set out by the Ministry of Education. Our programs meet and exceed all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and local government bylaws.

Being Montessori based, our programs naturally incorporate avenues for self-help and self-care, following the child's need, interest and ability. One of the most important components of the Montessori philosophy is to "follow the child". As caregivers we are there to guide and observe children, not to impose our will or choice of activity upon them. To quote Maria Montessori – "The essence of independence is to be able to do something for one's self."

Therefore, we promote positive self-help and self-care, reinforcing a child's sense of accomplishment and independence.

Our program also supports children's self-regulation, coaching them to deal with stress and remain calm, alert and ready to learn. Our classroom environments and caregivers promote calm, focused, interested children who are alert, able to modulate their emotions, pay attention, ignore distractions, inhibit their impulses and understand the consequences of their actions.

We understand that well-being does not only apply to the time the child spends in our care. Therefore, we encourage our staff to reach out to all families. For those families who may be experiencing stressful and challenging circumstances, Educara is committed to helping them make connections to formal support (e.g., Family Services Ottawa) and informal support through connections with other families, groups and community members.

To ensure our staff can better understand and ameliorate social and emotional well-being and resilience for children and families, Educara regularly uses PA days for participation in professional training. Further, we continuously connect with community partners and families through informational and special events throughout the year.

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2.2.1. Prohibited Behaviour

Educara does not tolerate nor accept any form of corporal punishment or other harmful disciplinary practices. These practices are never permitted at Educara. Any staff member who engages in such behavior is eligible for immediate dismissal and reporting to the authorities as required. Any staff member witnessing such behavior must immediately report it to the proper authority.;

Prohibited behavior includes;

- corporal punishment of the child, or inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
- the deliberate use of harsh or degrading measures on the child that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect
- depriving the child of basic needs including food, shelter, clothing or bedding
- locking the exits of the childcare center or home childcare premises for the purpose of confining children
- using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the children

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2.2.2. Nutrition

Proper nutrition is essential to growing minds and bodies. At Educara, we supply meals prepared in collaboration with the Chefs of the Barrhaven Vivia retirement community with which our childcare facility is co-located. These meals are prepared foodservice for the children and provide fresh, wholesome ingredients following Canada's Food Guide. Our exceptional standards of food service and preparations meet the needs of any dietary restrictions and allergies.

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2.2.3. Active Play

Being active can help young children stay healthy, improve movement skills, have fun, and feel happy, develop self-confidence, and improve learning and attention.

At Educara, we provide ample opportunity for active play. Indoors we do not restrict free movement and choice as long as these activities are safe and positive. Additionally, our programs include active play through participation in Yoga, dance, and music. and other such activities. Outdoor play is provided daily, whether it be in our enclosed play area or field trips. Our field trips promote interaction with the natural world providing exploration, investigation, and observation of the environment.

Our program includes a minimum of two hours of outdoor activities daily, weather permitting.

Exceptions to outdoor activities can be accommodated given written instruction from a physician or parent.

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2.2.4. Rest

At Educara, we recognize the requirement for children to have rest and quiet activity time. Depending on the child's needs, we provide time each day that encourages a mid-day nap, rest, or engagement in quiet activities, depending on the child's needs.

At the rest/nap times cots and sheets are provided for each child and are set out in rows in the classroom. Each child brings with them a blanket and any other required items for napping or rest, such as a stuffy, soother, or pillow.

During the toddler's nap staff will do a visual check of each child in intervals of 15 minutes, to check for any signs of distress, changes in breathing, or anything else noticed and record their observations on the daily sleep check.

Rest periods do not exceed two hours in length daily.

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2.3. Engagement



“The environment must be rich in motives which lend interest to activity and invite the child to conduct his own experiences.”

Maria Montessori

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2.4. Expression

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Throughout the Educara programs, we strive to include families and community members, finding ways to support and enrich the inclusion of varied language and culture. We welcome diversity.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Dec 05, 2019

2.5. Inclusion

Our aim:

At Educara Montessori childcare we aim to be inclusive of all children, including those with individualized plans. Some of the ways we do this by creating an environment that encourages freedom of choice, activities, and space for movement, imaginative play, and reality-based hands-on learning and exploration. We aim to create an environment that is designed for the child to feel welcome. As well, we do this by making inclusion a topic at staff meetings and having discussions around it.

The environment:

In our classrooms you will find areas for indirect and direct hands-on learning materials for mathematics, language, sensory activities, culture, and practical life/exploration. You will also see areas for gross motor activities, such as a yoga corner or music, a and peace table or quiet area for some alone time or rest. In both rooms you will find an imaginative play area, such as a kitchen or laundry area where children are able to role play, experimenting with decision making and working on social skills. This range of opportunity and freedom of choice allows for all children to feel welcome and find an area that they can enjoy.

In our environment all shelving and activities are low and at the age-appropriate levels, allowing all children to be able to easily access activities they would like to try, excluding some activities with smaller pieces where there may be a requirement for a teacher to bring down.

Staff discussions:

During our PD day staff meeting, we have begun and are continuing to include inclusion as a topic and openly discuss. This helps all staff to have a good understanding of what it means to be inclusive and strategies to do so. This also allows space to freely ask questions or exchange experiences and help guide each other to be as inclusive as possible.

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2.6. Program Statement Review

This program statement is to be reviewed and, if necessary, revised annually to ensure that it is aligned with the Minister's Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy made under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

Educara certifies that all staff, students, and volunteers have reviewed the program statement prior to interacting with children and at any time when the program statement is modified as evidenced in writing by the attached signatory sheet(s)

The approaches outlined in the program statement are observed in the program. Approaches that contravene the program statement are NOT observed in the program.

Bibliography

Ontario, The Government of. (2014). How Does Learning Happen? Queen's Printer for Ontario.
United, Generations. (2007). Fact Sheet. The Benefits of Intergenerational Programs. Washington, DC, USA.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Dec 05, 2019

3. Programs

This is an overview of our programs describing the goals that guide Educara's program for all children, and the approaches that will be implemented in order to provide a high-quality program.

Educara (Barrhaven Campus), is a Montessori based child care center operating in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Our location, within the same premises as the Barrhaven Viva retirement community, provides us with a unique opportunity for intergenerational participation.

We provide two well-equipped classrooms, one each for, Toddlers aged 18 months to 2 ½ years old and preschoolers 2 ½ – 5" to " 2 1/2 to 4 years old.

Educara is dedicated to supporting children's learning, development, health and well-being through nurturing, caring and responsive Early Childhood Educators and Montessori professionals, who focus on active learning, exploration, play, and inquiry, and who see children and their families as competent and able, and as active participants in all aspects of the program.

While Montessori based, we fully embrace Ontario Government's approach to early childhood education. Our pedagogy modifies the Montessori philosophy by incorporating more play based exploration and experiences and follows the principles set out in Ontario's How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH) document. At Educara we covet respect for all persons, cultures and view children as being competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

The core of our approach to child care is providing a safe, nurturing environment that promotes natural development through:

- **Belonging:** cultivation of authentic, caring relationships and connections creating a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.
- **Well-being:** nurturing children's healthy development and supporting their growing sense of self. Rather than teaching, we firmly believe in guiding and following the child's natural curiosity.
- **Engagement:** providing an environment and experiences that engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration, play and inquiry.
- **Expression:** fostering communication and expression in all forms.

The four foundations apply regardless of the child's age, ability, culture, language, geography, or setting. These foundations do not set a structured curriculum. While organized around the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression, the Educara program is holistic, melding these separate foundations into a single experience developing the whole child.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

4. Admission Process

A child cannot be admitted to the Centre without the completion of the admissions process and appropriate forms. These include personal information about your child, health records, emergency, and medical information, and any permission forms.

A registration form is only required once a spot is secured and we have confirmed space and start date. Registration forms can be found on our website at <http://www.educara.ca>

All registration forms should be sent by email to info@educara.ca, post or in person at: 275 Tartan Drive, Ottawa, Ontario. To register or find out if spaces are available please contact the school directly, via email, phone, or in person. If we are full at the time of interest you will be placed below the last person on our waitlist and we will contact you via your preferred contact method as soon as a space becomes available. There is no commitment to take the space from being on the waitlist, and if you no longer require care at the time a space becomes available you may remove yourself from the list. Should a space be available at the time of inquiry you will be directed to our registration forms, which can be found under admission at www.educara.ca. Spaces are on a first-come basis and the promptness of returning the completed registration forms will affect securing the space. Further to this, there is a \$75 non-refundable registration fee, which will be taken after we receive the registration forms.

Once enrolled, payment is due in advance, on the first of every month. If payment is not received, your service may be suspended.

An official income tax receipt will be issued to you in January.

Please note that fees are due regardless of attendance. Adjustments are not made to accommodate for sick days, vacation, closure due to inclement weather or other emergency closures.

Fees are also applicable for statutory holidays, PD days and Holiday closure. These include Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day and New Year's Day. All holidays and PD Days are communicated each year in Sept via the school calendar. All new registrations are provided with the calendars upon registration.

Snow days or winter closures will be sent out via email. If there is enough warning of the coming weather there will first be a warning email sent out the day before to check emails in the morning. We ask that during bad weather and storms parents check their emails in the morning in case there was not enough warning to send out an initial email the previous day. The decision for closure will be made and sent out to parents by 6:30 am. Should the snow day be called after the school day has begun parents will be emailed and/or called for early pickup and are to promptly come to the school to pick up their child so staff members are able to make it home safely.

Revision: 8 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

4.1. Payment Methods

We accept pre-authorized Visa/Mastercard

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Dec 05, 2019

5. Service Termination

Providing an environment conducive to our mission is one of our primary objectives. The safety of the community is a priority; therefore, the provision of our service is conditional on both student behavior and parent treatment of the school and staff. Educara reserves the right to suspend, dismiss or withdraw services for any of the following reasons:

- Outstanding fees – program fees or other
- Inappropriate behavior by a parent towards staff, other parents or students, such as: being belligerent, abusive, swearing, or harassing
- Through parent refusal or inability to abide by the policies and procedures as laid out in the parent handbook
- If we feel the student is not benefiting from the environment and program we provide, or if the best interests of the school or classroom are being compromised by a student's ongoing enrolment

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

5.1. Withdrawal

If you plan on withdrawing your child from the Centre, please note that we require **WRITTEN NOTICE a minimum of two months** notice from the 1st day of the month in advance of the withdrawal date. The non-refundable deposit is applied towards the last month's tuition.

Revision: 9 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

6. Fees

Please refer to the fee schedule at the end of this Handbook or obtain one from the Supervisor.

Fees are also posted on our website (www.educara.ca) and subject to change. Please contact us at info@educara.ca or (613) 702-1116 for fee information. Educara offers families to pre-arrange before and aftercare to be withdrawn electronically with the monthly payment amount. Otherwise charged at the end of the month. Please note if arriving after close (5:30 pm) the aftercare charge moves to \$1 a minute.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

6.1. Late Fees

The Centre closes promptly at 5:30pm, please ensure that your child is picked up before this time. Unless otherwise noted, all Before and After Care fees are invoiced separately at the end of each month and are due upon receipt.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

7. Immunization

Parents must show proof of immunization for their child before they can be accepted to the program. For information regarding what immunizations are necessary, please contact your doctor or Ottawa Public Health (OPH)

- Telephone at 613-580-6744
- Toll free number at 1-866-426-8885
- E-mail immunization@ottawa.ca

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

7.1. Exemptions

If your child is not immunized for either medical or philosophical reasons, we require a copy of either the Ministry Medical Exemption Form or the Ministry Exemption Form. These forms must be fully completed by a physician and/or have proper affidavit and notarization as required by OPH. If your child is not immunized, he/she is not subject to suspensions; however, in the event of an outbreak, the child will be excluded from attending the program while there is risk of transmission.

You are encouraged to speak with a Public Health Nurse (PHN) to discuss how best to protect your child from vaccine preventable diseases. For any questions, you may have related to vaccines or the exemption process, please call Ottawa Public Health (OPH) at 613-580-6744 to speak with a PHN.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

8. Punctuality

A sense of order and punctuality is in keeping with Montessori philosophy and a lack thereof can seriously disrupt the operation of the classroom and affect your child's ability to receiving the full benefit from the programs. We strongly recommend students arrive on time for their scheduled hours. If you know your child will be late, or away for any reason, please send an email to absent@educara.ca and include any details regarding the reason for absence or for coming in late.

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9. Health and Safety

The purpose of the Educara health and safety policies are to provide parents with a written statement of the procedures in place to protect their children. The policy protects child care providers, as well, by detailing the training and procedure standards that need to be followed on a daily basis.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

9.1. Accidents

It is our practice to document accidents resulting in a cut, scratch, bump, bruise, or any other visible mark. An accident form is completed by the staff member present and parents are notified as soon as possible. Copies of the form are given to the School Supervisor and parents.

In the case of a minor accident:

The student will be tended to by a staff member who will administer the appropriate first aid.

In the case of a serious accident:

- The school will call 911 and parents will be contacted immediately.
- If the student needs to go to the hospital, a staff member will accompany the student.
- Parents are expected to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

9.2. Evacuation

Should there be an emergency where the Centre's building needs to be evacuated (E.g. Fire, Flood, Extended Power Outage, etc.) parents will be notified as soon as possible to come and pick up their children.

The designated place to pick up children in case of an evacuation is:

Ottawa Christian School, 255 Tartan Drive, Barrhaven, On

Educara is in compliance with building, fire and health codes. Fire drills are held monthly.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

9.3. Allergies

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies or medical conditions. If anaphylactic, an EpiPen is required.

NUT PRODUCTS ARE NOT PERMITTED.

We ask that no peanut or any other nut products be brought to school. Each classroom maintains a schoolwide list of students with allergies. If a student has an allergy requiring an EpiPen a form and photograph of the student are displayed in the classroom and the staff room.

In order to minimize the chance of any anaphylaxis allergy foods being brought in, outside foods are not permitted to enter the daycare. We will make exceptions for food items being brought in for a special holidays/celebrations or birthdays. If you are bringing in any outside food for a celebration or birthday please ensure you have notified the supervisor or lead teacher in the room in writing, provide a full ingredient list and have the most recent list of allergies to avoid.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Mar 07, 2022

9.4. Emergency Contact Information

It is essential that you provide the school with current contact information. We rely on this information which is our primary point of reference in cases of emergency. All contact change requests should be directed to our Supervisor in writing or by email.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

9.5. First Aid and CPR

Educara requires staff to undergo first aid and CPR certification.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

9.6. Illness

Any child who is ill and unable to participate fully in regular activities should be cared for at home.

When your child is ill and will not be attending the program, please inform the Centre as soon as possible. This can be done via e-mail at absent@educara.ca. If you are unable to email, please call 613-702-1116 and leave a message. Please follow this up with an email to absent@educara.ca as soon as you are able to.

It is school policy to contact parents promptly if we observe that a student is sick or has a fever exceeding 38°C or 100°F. Parents are required to pick up their children right away; this reduces child discomfort and anxiety.

A child with diarrhea, a fever of 38 degrees Celsius or more, with unknown marks or rashes, or vomiting, will not be admitted to the program.

*A teacher has the right to refuse care to any child who does not seem well, or with unknown marks, rashes at their discretion

We are committed to maintaining a healthy environment by following the Ottawa Public Health's Guidelines for Schools and Child Care Facilities on Communicable Diseases and Other Childhood Health Issues in determining when a child can return to our program after suffering a communicable disease. A copy of the guidelines is available on Ottawa's Public Health website at <http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/public-health/resources-teachers-and-employers/guidelines-communicable-disease-and-other>.

These standards state that children should be kept home for at least 24 hours after the last occurrence of a temperature, diarrhea or vomiting.

Revision: 7 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

9.7. Medication

All medications given to your child must be accompanied by a Medication Authorization and Administration Form, please ask the staff for this form or obtain it from our website at <http://www.educara.ca>. Staff cannot administer medication unless it is prescribed by a doctor and must be in the original container with the child's name, time, dosage, name of medication and doctor clearly labeled.

No over the counter medications (Tylenol, Advil, Motrin or Cough medication etc.), home remedies or homeopathic medication will be administered by any staff unless accompanied by written recommendation by the child's doctor.

Below is the center's Medication Policy:

Educara can administer needed medication to a child only if:

- A doctor signs off on the medication in the space provided for any non-prescription medicine.
- A parent or guardian provides signed, written permission by filling out a medication authorization form provided by the center.
- The medication is in its original container with the child's name, dosage, name of the medication and the doctor's name.

Medication is given only by Educara staff, and not by supply staff, students, or volunteers. Each time the medication is given it is logged and signed off on. This must be approved by the Supervisor.

The medication authorization form will be retained for a minimum period of three years.

Revision: 5 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

9.8. Nutrition

Lunch and snacks, following recommendations from Canada's Food Guide will be provided. Menu plans are posted in the classroom and our website at <http://www.educara.ca/menus>. Any changes made to the lunch or snack schedule will also be noted accordingly. Educara is a nut restricted, allergy safe environment.

Food allergies will be posted in the child's room. Plans will be in place for any children with food allergies. All precautions will be made to protect children with food allergies.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

9.9. Drop off and Pick up

it is mandatory that at both drop-offs and pick up you greet a teacher to ensure they are aware of your child's attendance. Likewise, during the evening pick-up, please say goodnight to a staff member so we may mark your child off on the attendance sheet and, if necessary, briefly discuss your child's day.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

9.10. Release of Children

If you cannot pick up your child, please inform your child's teacher during drop off in the morning or in the case of an emergency, by calling the school and letting the Supervisor know, or by emailing to absent@educara.ca. If calling, do not leave a message on the answering machine – we cannot guarantee the message will be retrieved – instead, ensure you talk directly with the Supervisor or your child's Lead Educator or email at absent@educara.ca.

Please let them know who will be picking your child up in the evening and ensure that:

- The person is on the authorized list to pick up your child
- The person is familiar to your child
- The person has and is willing to show a picture I.D. and is over the age of 16.

In case of doubt, a child will not be released

Revision: 4 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

10. Security

School doors are locked at all times other than 7:30 am to 9:00 am and 4:00 pm to 5:30 pm on days the school is open. Please help us keep our school safe and refrain from holding the door open for someone you do not know. Parents have been provided access cards in the event a parent or visitor does not have their access card please knock on the door; a staff member will answer the door and verify access.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

10.1. Visitors

All visitors and volunteers must check in with the Supervisor and sign in at all times.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

10.2. Child Care Supervision Policy for Students and Volunteers

Educara stands firmly that all children enrolled in the Centre will be effectively supervised always.

Under no circumstances will direct unsupervised access be granted to anyone under the age of 18 years and who is not an employee of Educara. Volunteers, Co-Op Students and Placement Students are not permitted access to children unless supervised by an Educara employee and are not counted in staffing ratios.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

10.3. Vulnerable Sector Check

A Vulnerable Sector Check must be completed for all full time and part time staff, volunteers and students (over the age of 18) prior to placement with Educara.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

10.4. Suspected Abuse

The local CAS will be notified of all suspected abuse cases, as required by the CFSA, Section 72. Persons failing to report suspicion of child abuse are subject to legal action and a fine.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

10.5. Alcohol Consumption and/or Substance Abuse

Should you or an authorized person arrive at the Centre to pick up your child while you or the authorized person is under the influence of alcohol or any other drug that has apparently affected your judgment, in the opinion of any staff member, the interest of your child will be our primary concern. If such suspicion exists, a child will not be released.

The Educara staff shall assist you or the authorized person to find an alternate means of transportation. In the case of a dispute, the Centre will contact the local police to discharge any legal obligation our employees may have under the law. The Children's Aid Society (CAS) may also be contacted as per our obligation under the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA).

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

10.6. Prohibited Practices

The following are prohibited practices at Educara and may result in immediate termination of employment and reporting to the authorities:

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- © locking the exits of the child care center 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 emergency management policies and procedures;
- (d) 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;
- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- (f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

10.7. Field Trips and Outings

Throughout the year, the children may be provided an opportunity go on field trips to various local points of interest, festivities, and events including intergenerational programing within V!va retirement community. A notice and authorization form containing pertinent information will be sent home with your child at least a week in advance of the trip. Depending on the field trip, fees may apply. Transportation will be provided by Educara.

Outings are an opportunity for children to explore the school's neighborhood and engage in activities off the school premises (E.g. the garden next to the playground, neighborhood walks or trips to neighborhood parks, etc.) During initial enrolment, parents are requested to complete a form that provides the school with signed parental consent and authorization for outings.

Educara reserves the right to cancel field trips and outings without notice – any related fees will be refunded.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

10.8. 10.8. Child/Parent/Guardian code of conduct

At Educara and our inter-generational program partner V!Va Retirement Community, we strive to provide a safe, caring, learning environment for children, staff and families. We believe in the equality and respect diversity.

In order to achieve the above, it is imperative that each and every individual who is associated with our Educara abides by this Code of Conduct and conducts him/herself in a respectful manner. Educara expects that all adults and children within our centres be treated with dignity and respect. This includes directors, administrative staff, all other employees, children, parents, guardians, caregivers, and family members of children enrolled with our centres

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Board of Directors/Owners
- Educara Staff
- Students/Family members of students enrolled at Educara
- V!va staff
- Substitute Teachers and/or Volunteers
- Contractors/maintenance service providers
- Licensing coordinators and inspectors
- Delivery agents

We recognize the varying developmental capabilities of children and understand that it is normal for children to display inappropriate behaviour at times for a variety of reasons. The developmental capabilities of each child will always be considered when determining both expectations for appropriate behaviour and consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

*At Educara we follow these Guiding Principles: *

1. **BE RESPECTFUL:** We are respectful of ourselves and other people. We are respectful of the ideas and feelings of others. We solve our problems by talking and listening to each other respectfully to find a solution. We are respectful of the environment, equipment and materials.
2. **BE RESPONSIBLE:** We are responsible for our own actions and words. When problems arise, we use problem solving techniques to try to resolve the issue in a positive way.
3. **BE SAFE:** We work and play safely to help keep ourselves and others from getting hurt.
4. **BE SUPPORTIVE OF LEARNING:** We learn to the best of our abilities and support the learning of others.

We create a positive environment for children, parents, staff and others involved in our centre by:

1. Developing positive relationships, including making time to talk and listen.
2. Establishing clear, consistent limits, rules, procedures and policies.
3. Stating limits in a positive way and periodically reminding people.
4. Providing explanations for limits, rules, procedures and policies.
5. Modeling and encouraging appropriate behaviour; and

6. Working together in partnership to solve problems.

The following, while not limiting, are examples of unacceptable behaviour.

1. **All forms of bullying:** i.e., physical, verbal, emotional, social or cyber-bullying including comments, actions or visual displays that are intentional, hurtful and repetitive (i.e. hitting, pushing, name-calling, mocking, excluding someone, spreading rumours or gossip either in person or by using social networking internet sites);
2. **Harassment:** behaviour that degrades, demeans, humiliates or embarrasses someone (i.e., touching, name-calling, offensive jokes, yelling, etc.).
3. **All forms of abuse:** sexual, physical, or psychological (including verbally, in writing or otherwise).
4. **Discrimination:** against any person or group because of their race, colour, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, ethnic background, religion, age, sex, gender-determined characteristics, sexual orientation, marital or family status, source of income, political belief, and physical and mental disabilities.
5. **Actions that put another person at risk of harm** including violent or attempted violent physical acts (with or without a weapon) and threatening someone.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: May 11, 2021

11. Role of parents in the program

Parents, schools, and Students work together to build the Educara Community. Our common goal is to inspire and empower your children to achieve their full potential. Parents can support their children and the school by getting involved in various classroom activities that take place throughout the school year. Some of the activities include cultural presentations, field trips, and special events.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

11.1. Progress reports

Educara provides semi-annual individual reports, after which if parents have questions or concerns they are welcome to request to schedule a parent-teacher interview with the staff who wrote their report.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

11.2. Attending classroom observations

Half hour morning observation visits can be booked for children new to the program or in special circumstances as agreed upon and coordinated by the classroom Lead Educator.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

11.3. Participating in classroom activities

Support your child's classroom by getting involved in various classroom activities that take place throughout the school year. Some of the activities include, cultural presentations, field trips, and special events. Please see your classroom Lead Educator for more details.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

11.4. Supporting school activities and events

School activities and events serve to enrich our community and complement our program. School events such as field trips, victory garden days and holiday celebrations are a wonderful way for parents to get involved with their children's activities. We welcome parents who would like to come in and share skills and cultural activities with the classes to speak with their lead instructor to arrange.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

11.5. Parent Volunteers

An open invitation is extended to all our parents to volunteer. Parents are encouraged to complete a volunteer form to indicate their area of interest. Please contact your classroom Lead Educator or the Supervisor to get involved as an invaluable volunteer. Opportunities include:

- Fundraising and event planning
- Field trips
- Outdoor environment such as planning and planting
- Decorating, costume making for school concerts
- Class Parent
- Material making
- Cultural presentations

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Jan 21, 2020

12. Fundraising

As a good corporate citizen, Educara believes in giving. Fundraising is used to gather funds and aid for various local, national or international charities.

Also, as an independent school, Educara does not receive funding from the Ministry of Ontario. We therefore sometimes rely on monies raised through fundraising to enhance our programming and facilities.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

13. Process for expressing concerns

The Supervisor will always be present to meet with parents who have concerns about our Centre. Day to day concerns will be dealt with as quickly as possible. Please feel free to call the main site at 613-702-1116 to speak with our Supervisor between 8:30 am and 4:00 pm or e-mail at info@educara.ca

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

14. Birthday Celebrations

Should you wish to provide a special treat for your child's birthday, please coordinate with the classroom Lead Educator – No nuts please. Parents are asked to provide any birthday invites to the Lead Educator who will assist your child distribute them

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

14.1. Birthday Book Club

The Birthday Book Club is a program that celebrates children's birthdays, enables their peers to share their special day, and contributes to the classroom's library of storytime books.

We offer parents the option to donate an age-appropriate book to honor your child's birthday. The school will prepare and include a book plate on the inside cover citing your child's name and birth date to acknowledge the donation. The book is then placed in our classroom library. Every time the book is read during storytime, the citation is read before beginning the story as recognition of the child's contribution. It has been our experience that the Birthday Book Club encourages children's interest in books and stories while promoting pride and self-esteem.

Participation in the Birthday Book Club is strictly voluntary.

In keeping with the Montessori philosophy, the book's illustrations should depict realistic themes. Please avoid cartoon, T.V., and super-hero characters.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

15. GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.1. Programs

Toddler – Children aged 18 months to 2 ½ years.

Pre-school – Children aged 2 ½ years to 4 years.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

15.2. Hours of Operation

Our doors are open at 7:30 am and close promptly at 5:30 pm.

The core program operates from 9 am till 4 pm

Before Care is from 7:30 – 9:00 am. After Care is from 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 12, 2019

15.3. Ratios of staff to children

Toddler: 1 to 5

Preschool: 1 to 8

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.4. Scent-free School

Educara aims to respect the sensitivities and allergies of those in our community. We aim to be a scent-free school.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.5. Smoking

There is no smoking on school property.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.6. Parking

Limited parking is available and signs are posted. Parking in the roundabout is not permitted as it blocks emergency response access.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.7. Children's Personal Belongings

All sunscreen and water bottles must be labeled according to the ministry of education. We recommend also labeling all other items, such as clothing, hats, and mittens, as many families shop at the same store and this helps to prevent your child's belongings from becoming lost. Educara is not responsible for any lost or damaged items. The ministry does require by law water bottles sunscreen and any diaper creams to be labeled with the child's name.

Revision: 4 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

15.8. Clothing

Clothing should be appropriate for the planned physical activities, the season and anticipated weather conditions. Children should have sufficient changes of clothing, especially during inclement weather and the duration of toilet training. Diapers, creams, Vaseline, etc. shall be supplied by the parent(s).

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.9. Toys

Please do not bring toys from home. They tend to get misplaced, and this makes for a sad departure for the child. A small, favorite cuddly toy to be used during rest and nap time may be allowed if deemed necessary.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

15.10. Outdoor play

Outdoor play and activities are encouraged as much as possible at Educara Montessori Child Care. We take children out in various weather conditions and ask that children always have weather appropriate clothing provided for them, such as; winter/summer hats, snow suits/boots, splash suits/rain boots, etc.

Staff will apply sunscreen during the summer months when the UV is a 3 or higher prior to outdoor play times. Staff will also ensure children are wearing the items provided when necessary, and will gage this based on the weather conditions at the time. If you have any specific guidance please ensure the staff in your child's room are aware.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Dec 07, 2021

16. FEES FOR 2019-2020

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

16.1. Tuition

Program	Hours	Cost
Toddler: Core	9:00am to 4:00pm	\$1389 / Month
Pre-School: Core	9:00am to 4:00pm	\$1286 / Month

Monthly Before and After Program Care

Full-Time Before/After program care (7:30-5:30, Monday-Friday)	\$150/month
Part-Time Before and/or After program care (7:30/8:00/8:30/9:00am until 4:00/4:30/5:00/5:30pm)	\$41.67 per 30-minute segment (at indicated times) per month, capped at \$150/month

Ad-Hoc Before and After Program Care

Occasional Before/After Program Care	7:30-9:00am and/or 4:00-5:30pm	\$10/hour or part thereof per usage
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Revision: 8 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

16.2. Payment Terms

Pre-authorized Credit Card(Visa/Mastercard)

Unless otherwise noted, all occasional before and aftercare fees are invoiced separately at the end of each month and are due upon receipt

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Dec 05, 2019

16.3. Processing Fee

Once an enrollment date is approved and confirmed by Educara administration, a non-refundable processing fee of \$75.00 CDN will apply

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

17. Waitlist

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

17.1. Application Process

As required by Ontario's Ministry of Education, the following details Educara's waitlist policy. It is Educara's policy to manage our waitlist fairly and transparently while considering and maintaining best business practices.

To be placed on our waitlist parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must complete a waitlist application form providing all requested information. Children must be at least 18 months old to begin childcare with Educara or meet the early entry criteria. Children can be placed on Educara's waitlist at any age but the requested start date must not precede their eligibility to start childcare.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

17.2. Early entry criteria

In order to accept a child under the age of 18 months old the child must be able to reasonably participate in Educara's toddler program. They must be capable to participate in circle time activities, outdoor play, and reasonably able to use the material in the classroom. Any child under 18 months old must be able to walk, sit up on their own, sit in a chair on their own, and be walking.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

17.3. Placement on the list

The following factors are taken into consideration when placing children on Educara's wait list.

- Date on which the completed application, including all requested information, is received.
- The requested month that child care would start
- The age a child would be when starting care at Educara
- Whether the application is for a single child or siblings

Parents should apply for the earliest start date that meets their needs and Educara's eligibility criteria.

Educara is not responsible for contacting parents or guardians for child care spaces that become available before their after the preferred start date. If parents or guardians defer a space or request a change of start date, their position on the waitlist will be in accordance with their new start date. All deferments and start date changes must be done in writing and addressed to the school's Supervisor or via email to info@educara.ca. Should a child care space not be available for the month requested, you will be contacted, in accordance with your place on the waitlist, as soon as a space becomes available.

Revision: 4 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

17.4. Priority Classification

Generally, Educara places applicants on their wait list on a first-come-first-serve basis. However, Educara gives priority to various care requirements and associations with Educara's management, employees and relationship with existing clients. These different classifications effectively move applicants towards the head of the wait list. The priority classifications are:

1. Applicants requesting full time child care
2. Siblings of existing children enrolled with Educara
3. Family of Educara's senior management team
4. The children of Educara and Viva Retirement Home
5. All other applicants

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

17.5. Maintaining the waiting list

Educara reviews the waitlist and available spaces monthly. If space becomes available Educara will contact the next applicant on the waitlist by the preferred method that has been provided. Should the applicant not respond within 48 hours of being contacted space will go to the next applicant on the waitlist and so forth. Should an applicant change their mind after accepting the space they must give written two-month notice or pay the full amount for the two months, as all other registered families are required to do. Educara will update the waitlist monthly to reflect the current applicant still awaiting a space.

Revision: 3 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

17.6. Offers of enrollment

Educara endeavours to provide applicants as much notice as possible if we are aware of upcoming spaces. Child care spots become available as children leave Educara. Educara requires a minimum of two months' notice before a child's last day with Educara. Therefore, it is expected that Educara will hold a space for an applicant for two months from when the applicant became aware of the available space.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

17.7. Request for waitlist information

Applicants can contact the Educara Supervisor by telephone (613-702-1116) or email (info@educara.ca) to request their current status on the waitlist. All inquiries will be answered within 2 working days. The Supervisor will respond to the primary email address listed on the application form. At that time, the Supervisor will let the applicant know what number they currently hold on the waitlist for their requested start date. This number may change depending on withdrawals from the waitlist, other applicants changing their requested start dates, or if priority applicants join the waiting list.

The Ministry of Education mandates that applicants can request to have access to view a daycare's waiting list that preserves anonymity of wait list applicants. Educara does not maintain a separate, anonymous wait list. If a request is made for a physical copy of the wait list, Educara will provide a redacted list within fourteen business days listing only the month of the start date and age group requested by the inquiring applicant.

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Feb 05, 2020

18. Policy

Name of Child Care Centre: Educara

Date Policy and Procedures Established: Sept. 1st, 2017

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: January 24, 2020

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Revision: 5 — Last modified: Jan 24, 2020

18.1. Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

*Staff: *Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

18.2. General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, childcare providers, and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff is available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Educara and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

18.3. Confidentially

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

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

18.4. Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feel uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

18.5. Concerns of suspected abuse or neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the Child and Family Services Act.

For more information, visit: <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Revision: 2 — Last modified: Aug 28, 2019

19. Covid-19

Revision: 1 — Last modified: Jun 16, 2020

19.1. Covid-19 policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to create and implement new and changing guidelines and regulations while operating during Covid-19. The guidelines and regulations set out in this policy are based off Ottawa Public Health and The Ministry of Education's guidelines and recommendations.

Sanitization and general guidance of the space, toys, and equipment

Sanitization and cleaning measures will be increased during this time.

Regularly touched surfaces, such as door handles and light switches, will be disinfected at a minimum of twice daily.

Play material/classroom toys will be cleaned and disinfected each time the group changes (Tuesday's, Wednesday's, and Friday's).

Washrooms will be disinfected daily.

There will be separate Toddler and Preschool toy bins outdoors that will be disinfected each time the group changes (Tuesday's, Wednesday's, and Friday's).

Mirrors, chairs, and the staff room will be wiped down daily, and thoroughly disinfected once per week.

Cubbies will be disinfected between part time children and on the weekends by the cleaners.

Bleach and water mixtures, following the public health guidelines of both low and high level, will be prepared and used for most disinfecting/cleaning.

Toys will be disinfected using bleach and water as part of a 4-step process; 1. Warm soap and water 2. Cold rinse 3. Bleach and water 4. Air dry. Other cleaning products may include Lysol, or other know disinfectants for material unable to be cleaned in this way, such as wood.

In addition to the daily cleaning and disinfecting by the Educara staff members we will continue to have weekly professional cleaners in. Educara will also continue the use of professional laundry services weekly for any bedding, towels, cloths, etc.

Children's blankets will be sent home on the child's last day of the week for washing. A new cot and new sheet will be used for each child should the child switch part way through the week, or be disinfected/washed between children. All cots will be disinfected weekly.

No shared plush toys of any kind.

When using sensory activities (sand, rice, water, etc.) children must be asked to wash hands before and after each use.

Any children's personal items coming into the centre must either be labelled or inside something labelled. Children's items should be limited to those required for care, such as, soother, bottles and water bottles, hats, etc.

All items must go home at the end of the child's week for disinfecting of the cubby.

Physical Activities

- High contact physical activities should take place in outdoor settings only. Masking is not required outdoors for high contact physical activities.
- Low contact activities are permitted indoors. For children in grade 1 and up, masking is encouraged but not required if a minimum of two metres distance can be maintained between groups and as much as possible within a group.

*Hand and respiratory etiquette *

Hands should always be washed at regular times, such as, before and after eating and after using the washroom. We are encouraging extra hand washing as needed, such as after touching face, or before and after any sensory play.

If washing with soap and water is unavailable at the time hand sanitizer is provided in each room and can be used as a secondary alternative.

Staff should use proper respiratory etiquette by using their inner elbow, regardless of masking, for coughing and sneezing, or any other similar needs. Respiratory etiquette should also be consistently encouraged with the children.

Child Suspected, confirmed, or negative cases of COVID-19

If a child begins showing symptom(s) while in care:

- The child will be immediately separated from others in supervised area while parent is called and pick up is completed.
- The parent or guardian will be advised to use the online self-assessment tool and follow instructions which may include seeking medical advice or going for testing for COVID-19.
- Area where child was, or has known to been, will be disinfected.
- Parents/guardians of other children will be notified in the event of a confirmed case

Cleaning procedure

1. Put disposable gloves on
2. Begin cleaning as soon as the child has been isolated, and the parent(s) contacted.
3. Cleaning will be done with soap and water, followed by the premixed bleach and water mixtures wherever

possible. Where not possible toys will be wiped and disinfected using bleach and water or Lysol products.

4. Once cleaning is done, dispose of mask and gloves and thoroughly wash hands. Then replace with a new mask and wash hands again.

Reporting illness

Educara staff will be following the steps in place by Ottawa public Health and The Ministry of Education for reporting any confirmed cases of Covid-19. This includes;

- Reporting any child or staff member with a confirmed case of COVID-19 to Ottawa Public Health, and a serious occurrence to the Ministry of Education.
- Follow any guidance from Ottawa Public Health after reporting.
- Parents are informed of any confirmed cases within their cohort via email, as soon as we are made aware.

Physical distancing

Physical distancing will be used wherever possible by staff and throughout the programming. While we will encourage physical distancing as outlined below, and wherever else possible. We also recognize children's need for social interaction, play, and comfort as part of their healthy development.

Staff:

- Physical distancing will take place between staff members as much as possible while working together and breaks will be taken separately or with a minimum of 2 metres apart.
- Cohorts in separate rooms will avoid mixing, including in the cubby room. Both staff and children will stay in one cohort as much as possible.
- Staff will only change cohorts if required for safety reasons, such as maintaining ratio

Children:

- Cots will be spaced further apart wherever/whenever possible, and children places head to toe for sleeping.
- Children will be spaced out during mealtimes whenever possible.
- Children in separate cohorts will not mix in the cubby room. To avoid this, during drops offs children will go 1-3 at a time to cubbies monitored by staff. And preschoolers will put snowsuits on in the classroom. Toddlers use cubby space for taking off their snowsuits. Snowsuits in the preschool classroom should be kept to the area around the door to the yard and tables.
- Outdoor play and activities will be encouraged as much as possible to allow more space for running and playing.

Group events

Any group events held will follow all local Ottawa Public Health guidelines.

Visitors and tours

In class visits by parents of children at Educara or by those seeking care are permitted for short periods. Tours will be given on a need to basis, once a space has been offered.

All visitors must self screen, sign in, and wear a mask throughout their visit. If visiting during operational hours, visitors must also wear any other current requirements such as face shields or eyewear

Meetings

Parent and teacher communications will take place mainly over email during this time for any need to know information, such as absences and appointments. Parent meetings will be scheduled over the phone for any questions or concerns requiring discussion between the supervisor and parent, or staff and parents as much as possible.

Staff meetings can take place after closing or before opening times and masks are required. During any mealtimes mask can be off with a minimum of 2 metre between staff.

Regular scheduled semi-annual parent teacher meeting will continue to take place in person following guidelines.

Intergenerational programming and use of V!VA

All intergenerational programming will be cancelled until the restrictions for retirement homes are lifted, and V is in agreement to resume.

Educara will remain separate from V retirement home and will not use any of their spaces with the children for programming until the restrictions for retirement homes are lifted.

Educara staff are to only enter V to use the main washrooms, our staff room, for screening, or to communicate with V on a need to basis, and are not to bring children with them at any time. When entering V for any reason staff are to wear a face mask.

Food services

***Regular food services:** *V will continue to provide us with snacks and lunch. Face masks are worn while preparing and delivering snacks and meals. The cart will be left outside the door and taken in after to avoid contact. Once finished the cart is to be returned to the hallway/outside door and the handles disinfected for pick up.

Temporary food services: In the event of an outbreak at V!va, food service will temporarily be provided by The Lunch Lady until V!va is no longer in outbreak and is able to resume regular food service.

Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment is not required for children and is especially not recommended for those under 2 years of age. It is optional for those 2 years old and above, and is up to the individual child's guardians if they are required to wear a mask.

Staff are always required to wear a medical grade mask and eye protection while inside the centre and during outdoor play.

Visitors are required to wear a mask while onsite without children, or both a medical grade mask and eye protection if engaging with children during the visit.

Before and after the use of any personal protective equipment staff must wash hands properly/thoroughly.

Drop off and pick up procedures

Drop offs and pick ups will take place outside the facility.

Drop offs and pick ups will happen at the door for the toddler room and at the play yard door for the preschool room.

If you are dropping off late or picking up early, you may be asked to wait until a staff member can bring the child through to the entrance door safely.

Parents should not be in the cubby room for any reason. Children will be assisted into the room by a staff member at their entrance door. Parents waiting to drop off must be a minimum of 2-meter distance from anyone outside their own family.

Parents should bring the minimal items required for the child, such as, rain suit, hat, indoor shoes, and not anything extra at this time

%(marker-yellow)

Parents/guardians must be available to pick up immediately should their child start to show symptoms while in care.%(

Daily screening for children, staff and visitors:

Screening must be done within a two hour window of entry

Parents are required to self screen their children at home using the Ottawa Public Health COVID-19 screening link for children before sending their child to care each day. This link can be found on the Ottawa public Health website <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/> , or on the Educara website

www.educara.ca as a pop up when you enter the website and under admissions.

Staff and visitors are required to use the Ottawa Public Health screening link for workplaces prior to entering each day, as well as, sign in and confirm doing so upon entry. This link can be found on the Ottawa public Health website <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/> , or on the Educara website www.educara.ca as a pop up when you enter the website and under admissions.

Daily attendance records

A daily attendance record for all staff and visitors will be kept. Staff and visitors are to sign upon arrival and provide contact tracing as needed.

A daily screening confirmation record will be kept, including the child's name and temperature upon arrival. Staff are responsible for taking the temperature and confirming the screening was completed. Children's regular attendance records will continue to be kept.

Guidelines for returning to childcare after having a Covi-19 symptom

Travel – Unvaccinated children cannot attend after travelling outside of Canada for 14 days, regardless of the parent's vaccination status.

For any Covid-19 symptoms – The child (and household members) must self isolate for 5 days and have their symptom(s) improving for a minimum of 24 hours, whichever is longer. 48 hours if the symptom is gastral (diarrhea / vomiting). Improving means that the symptom is mostly gone.

If Covid-19 symptoms develop at daycare; The child will be sent home with two rapid antigen tests (depending on supplies). The tests must be completed 24-48 hours apart.

Test results:

If the child test negative on both tests, they can return after symptoms have been improving without the use of medication for 24 hours (48 hours if Gastrointestinal symptoms – vomiting/diarrhea).

If the child tests positive on either test, they must self isolate for five day and symptoms have been improving without the use of medication for 24 hours (48 hours if Gastrointestinal symptoms – vomiting/diarrhea).

If your child has a positive Covid-19 antigen rapid test result they are exempt from the antigen rapid testing for 30 days from the positive test result, and 90 days from a positive PCR test result, and would be required to complete the current isolation period for any new symptoms during this time.

Ottawa public health daily screening link for childcare; – <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

For further clarification, we recommend visiting the screening links below, and following the steps

provided by Ottawa Public Health, as they sometimes change. The screening should be completed daily for your child prior to entering the facility.

Ottawa Public Health can also be reached at 613-580-6744.

[Ottawa public health daily screening link for childcare:](#) “

Also can be found on www.educara.ca

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