Early Learning Centre

ELGIN HOME CHILD CARE

Parent Handbook

"Committed Partners in your Child's Growth"

Mission Statement

Early Learning Centre is committed to providing quality care along with learning experiences for all children in a safe, nurturing atmosphere to families in Elgin and the surrounding area.

This is provided through warm, caring, and safe environments, play experiences, and the guidance of trained and experienced staff.

Our commitment embodies respect and support for our families and staff utilizing our services. Through the collaborative efforts of parents, staff, board members, and community partners, opportunities for optimal growth in all areas of development are provided for every child.

Vision Statement

We will continue to build positive and responsive relationships with staff, families, and the community. By engaging in the community in a meaningful way, this partnership ensures that we can focus on children's social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive development in a holistic way.

Program Statement

To ensure that we provide a high-quality experience for families and children, our programming and pedagogy are guided by the How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014) document.

- Every child has a sense of **belonging** when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world
- Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and **wellbeing**.
- Every child is an active and **engaged** learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses
- Every child is a capable communicator who **expresses** himself or herself in many ways.

Within a warm, nurturing environment, children actively participate in positive, interactive experiences that are based on their current interests and real-life experiences. Our programs are flexible and creative and provide children opportunities for decision-making and growth towards independence and responsibility.

We view children as resourceful and competent, capable of complex thinking, and rich in potential. By observing the children's interaction and language, we learn about their interests, experiences, and needs. By recognizing and acting upon teachable moments, the program staff engages children in planning activities that are meaningful and relevant to their world. With the guidance of the educators/Home Care Providers, projects are chosen that generate enough interest and curiosity to provoke children's creative thinking and problem-solving and are open to different avenues of exploration.

We value positive and responsive relationships with families. By engaging families in a meaningful way, this partnership ensures that we can focus on their child's social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive development.

Program Statement Goals and Approaches

Early Learning Centre's Program Statement is consistent with the Minister of Education's policy and statement on programming and policy (0. Reg. 137/15), aligns with our policies and procedures, and is used to guide our work with children and families.

Children have a strong sense of self, health, and well-being. Children are provided with a variety of healthy meals and snacks daily. Children, have the opportunity to serve themselves with a variety of choices.

Supportive positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers, and staff. This is created through open communication with families, co-workers, and children.

Children are encouraged to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate. Through role modeling and naming emotions children are developing skills to be able to self-regulate with support from educators.

We offer a rich open-ended environment that supports opportunities for a child-led, empowering, and play-based learning and exploration experience. Programming and ongoing projects are generated from observations and children's emergent ideas and interests.

Through keen observations and engagement children are supported in their curiosity and exploration of their natural environment. Children are provided with open-ended materials that allow for the natural flow of creativity and the opportunity to make representations of what they understand or imagine.

Educators plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported. Each child receives equal acknowledgment, encouragement, and engagement.

Our indoor and outdoor environments allow for limited transitions, flexibility for rest periods, and periods of uninterrupted play where safe, rich measures are practiced. Programming allows children the opportunity to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on their individual needs to regenerate or self-regulate.

Educators continue to foster engagement and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children. Using the Lillio program for documentation and ongoing communications, we continue to have open and valuable communication and relationships with all families and children within the program.

To engage local community partners with all aspects of our agency from operations to play-based learning that encompasses cultural and diverse experiences. Parents and local partners are invited to participate in and enhance our programs.

Educators are warm, caring, qualified professionals, carefully chosen through a selection process designed to determine their ability to meet the needs of children. Educators are supported through continuous learning opportunities.

Director's document and review of the impact of the approaches on the children and their families. Directors/Supervisors conduct regular program visits to document, review and discuss with the educators, the impact of the approaches on the children and their families.

Inclusion

EHCC is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive programs, and practices that respond to the individual abilities and needs of every child. We know that children need to feel valued, have friends, and feel that they belong. We provide safe, caring environments where all children are valued and have opportunities to participate with their peers in activities that promote their emotional, physical, social, and intellectual growth and development. We foster each child's sense of belonging and feelings of self-worth through respectful and supportive relationships among staff, children, their families, and the community.

Home Care Providers work in partnership with parents and special needs resource agencies, such as All Kids Belong, to meet the individual needs of children and their staff families. By working collaboratively with parents and resource agencies, we ensure that strategies are implemented that support each child's unique needs.

Approaches for Guiding Children's Success

Our aim is for the children and staff to have a safe and enjoyable time at the program. We establish reasonable limits for behaviour which are consistently monitored by all home care providers. These limits are appropriate to the developmental level of the child and consider the health, safety, and rights of all individuals. A positive approach is used to guide the children, and each situation and child is considered individually. Our methods include redirection, logical and natural consequences, limit setting, modeling, providing choices, and anticipating situations, recognizing appropriate behavior, and involving children in conflict resolution.

Parent Involvement

Parents are welcome in all aspects of the program. Feedback through questionnaires and daily communication with the program staff are valuable methods of contributing to your child's care. We encourage participation to help with our fundraising ventures or assist with field trips or special events. Parents participating in field trips or special events will be required to provide a current Vulnerable Sector Check.

We use Lillio as a tool to document your children's daily routine and developmental milestones. We use this tool as a way for parents to feel connected and to share with parents and guardians. Photos and developmental milestones for the children will be submitted using the Lillio program.

Permission for Video Taping or Photos

On occasion, the children may be photographed or videotaped. These photos may be used on the ELC website, Facebook, Community Annual Report or the local newspapers for special community announcements or events. These videos could be used for educational purposes or to be shown during events such as an open house or parent information workshops on our programs.

Addressing Matters of Concern

We work in partnership with parents and community partners to meet the individual needs of children and their families. We value positive, respectful, and responsive relationships and foster engagement and ongoing communication with parents about the children and the program.

Open communication with parents is essential to a quality childcare experience. Home Care Providers will discuss your child's day with you and will ask for your feedback to ensure your child has a positive experience in our program. All issues and concerns brought forward are taken seriously and every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns as quickly as possible. An initial response will be provided within **five (5)** business days.

All issues and concerns will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons ie: CAS, Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators.

We strive to meet the needs of all children and families enrolled in our childcare programs. However, in certain situations, it may become necessary for a discussion regarding alternative childcare options. EHCC does not make this decision lightly and makes every reasonable effort to meet each child's needs so that they can participate in a meaningful, purposeful, and successful manner in the program.

Depending upon the nature of your concern, please follow the steps below:

Nature of Issue/Concern	Steps to Report Issue/Concerns
Program ie: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, programming activities, feeding arrangements	1. Raise the issue/concern directly with the program educator 2. If the issue cannot be resolved, contact the Director
General Operations-Related ie: childcare fees, staffing, waiting lists, menus	1. Raise the issue/concern directly with the Director

Staff, Student, Volunteer	1. Raise the issue/concern directly with the individual 2. If the issue cannot be resolved contact the Director 3. All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, students, or volunteers that put a child's health, safety, and well-being at risk should be reported to the Director as soon as it becomes apparent

Should parents express an issue or concern directly home care provider, home care provider will:

- Be attentive and listen carefully – show interest that you want to understand the issue/concern.
- Seek all pertinent information to identify and solve the problem together.
- Plan a mutually agreeable time to meet with a parent when children are not present, if necessary.
- Contact their director for support if a resolution cannot be found.
- Document the situation, which will include the issue/concern and the steps taken to resolve it.
- Should the situation escalate, the Director will contact the Executive Director to discuss the next steps. The next steps may include contacting the Ministry of Education Program Advisor to inform them of the situation.

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Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Executive Director at elcexecutivedirector@earlylearningcentre.ca or at 519-631-7018 ext. 400.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Respectful Communication and Conduct

At St. Thomas Early Learning Centre, we are committed to fostering a positive, inclusive, and respectful environment for all children, families, and staff. As part of this commitment, we expect all individuals to always engage in courteous and professional communication.

Harassment, aggression, intimidation, or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated. This applies to all interactions between parents/guardians, staff, providers, and visitors within our programs and facilities.

If a parent or guardian behaves aggressively or inappropriately toward a staff member:

1. The staff member may immediately end the conversation or interaction if they feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or disrespected.
2. The incident will be reported to the Supervisor and/or Director and documented in writing.
3. A review of the situation will be conducted, which may include follow-up conversations with those involved to determine the next appropriate steps.
4. Follow-up actions may include:
    - A formal warning
    - A required meeting to review expectations around respectful communication
    - Temporary or permanent suspension of access to the Centre, depending on the severity or recurrence of the behavior
    - Notification of authorities in the event of serious threats or violence
5. Staff involved in any such incident will be supported by the management team to ensure their safety and well-being.

We believe that respectful and open communication between families and staff is essential to supporting the growth and development of every child. By working together in partnership and with mutual respect, we can create the best experience possible for your child.

Contacts:

Executive Director is available to set up an appointment at michelle.good@earlylearningcentre.ca

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

Duty to Report

The duty to report is an ongoing obligation. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is, or maybe in need of protection, by law, a report must be made to the Children's Aid Society. The duty to report overrides the provision of any other provincial statute.

Licensed Home Care

Licensed Home Childcare is a program that is unique from a Centre based program. It gives a home away from home feeling by giving the children lots of different experiences. Home Childcare allows children ages 0-12 to be all together interacting and learning from each other in such a beautiful way. Our providers and families are fully screened and are required to have a valid First Aid and CPR (level C) certification. Many of our programs offer special outings and learning opportunities right within our community. Our homes provide environments with a natural feel including loose parts and practical play that are based on the curriculum, How Does Learning Happen? The Canada Food Guide is followed when supporting the providers with meal planning. Our Home Visitors are Registered Early Childhood Educators and visit the Providers home Regularly. Our visits are unscheduled and scheduled monthly and offer support and ensure Ministry Requirements are met.

Programs

Infant/Toddler

Social, emotional, and physical development is fostered through active exploration, sensory, and musical experiences in a safe and supportive, play-based setting. Our infants also learn and explore through outdoor play, and/or community walks daily.
Your child has their own playpen/cot for naps throughout the day which are monitored by provider.

We follow your child's schedule and carefully document meals, naps, diaper changes, fluids, and provide photos of your child's engagement throughout the day.
Parents of infants 12months and younger must complete a written infant Feeding Schedule as required under the Childcare and Early Years Act. Parents are required to supply all food and formula/ milk for children unable to eat table food. Parents are responsible for preparing formulas and filling bottles for their child. Providers will not offer children a bottle in bed.

We ask that parents provide the following items clearly labeled with their child's name:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Seasonal outdoor clothing (hats without strings, mittens, boots, snow pants/splash pants, etc.)
- 3 changes of clothing
- Blanket or comfort toy (if needed) for rest times.
- Soother and clips (if needed)
- Bottles (and liners if needed)
- Water cup
- Formula in a sealed container/ breast milk/ homo milk
- Footwear for indoors and outdoors
- Sunscreen
- Cream or powder (if required)

Preschool

Our preschool program offers a unique combination of emergent philosophies to create a well-rounded program that encourages children to be creative, imaginative, and independent all while being present in a nurturing and warm environment.

Our preschool programs offer a home-like environment that fosters each child's ability to learn. Each home contains areas for creativity, sensory, discovery, dramatic play, reading, blocks, and woodworking. Children are given extended periods of time to develop their own ideas as well as strengthen their skills.

School Age

School-age care refers to all programs run through the summer break. Children attending the school-age programs can range in age from 6 to 12.

We provide a space that welcomes children of varied ages, abilities, interests, cultures, and a safe, child-friendly environment that encourages children to have fun and take safe risks. Our program offers children opportunities to make friends, develop relationships with adult role models, and build self-esteem and conflict resolution skills.

Children are given experiences, choice, flexibility, time, and space to explore, experiment, and reflect. This environment provides a variety of experiences and learning opportunities to support children's learning and development. These experiences may be spontaneous or more formal; based inside or outside; during routines or special events; relaxed or more active.

Planning for children's wellbeing, engagement, expression, and belonging is crucial for the provision of quality programs for children and their families in a school-age care setting. Learning experiences are enhanced when educators take the time to reflect on children's interests and needs and make plans to support them.

Items required to bring (please label items):

- Backpack
- Sunscreen
- Extra clothes
- Water bottle

Outside Food

Due to the increasing amount of food allergies among young children, it is our policy to restrict outside foods from coming into any EHCC programs. If your child has food allergies, please see the steps below.

The following steps will be followed:

- Parents may provide food for their infants, as children at this age are on individual diets. Please indicate your infant's needs in writing to their primary caregiver.
- Children who require a specialized diet because of food allergies or food restrictions will be noted on their registration form. If the restrictions cannot be managed by the Provider, parents will be asked to supply the food each day, labeled with your child's name.

- The Provider will review any outside food when arriving to ensure parents are meeting the above requirements.

Please keep in mind that many pre-packaged treat items have very little nutritional value. We strongly encourage parents to consider this when packing lunches.

Healthy Eating

Nutritious lunches and snacks are prepared daily for your child. By following Canada's Food Guide a rotational menu is planned and posted for your reference. As some children enrolled in the program may have life-threatening food allergies, except for infants not yet on table foods.

Anaphylactic Children

An anaphylactic child is one who has a severe, life-threatening allergy. They could experience very strong reactions such as rashes, hives, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of the lips, mouth, tongue, and throat, difficulty breathing, and/or loss of consciousness.

- Providers will inform parent of any anaphylactic allergies in the program prior to food being sent (ie. Outside food)
- Please ensure that your child's hands and face have been washed with soap and water after eating as even touch to the skin with a contaminated source could cause a life-threatening reaction.
- If food is brought from home parents are to label food brought to the childcare centre with the child's full name and the date the food arrived at the childcare centre.
- When food is provided from home for children, Providers will provide appropriate supervision to ensure that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Please remember to have a spare set of clothing in case your child should spill any food or drink on themselves.

Health and Administration of Medication

All prescription medication must be in the original container with a prescription label that is clearly marked with your child's name, date, the name of the medication, and the instructions for storage and administration. Home Care Provider will only administer medication according to the instruction on the prescription label. A medication form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian prior to administering medication to a child. Our providers will document and initial: the

dosage, time given, and any side effects observed each time medication is administered. Please ensure that the medication is passed on to the program staff/provider for safe storage. Parents will be required to initial the medication form daily.

Non-prescription topical creams must be in the original container, clearly labeled with a list of ingredients.

Due to the frequency and their longer-term daily usage, any non-prescription creams or ointments that are being supplied by a parent/guardian (i.e.: Sunscreen, Vaseline, over-the-counter diaper creams or lotions, etc.) that are to be applied to a child, will be administered as directed by the parent/guardian.
If at any time the administration is changed by the parent/guardian, over and above the regular routine of care originally provided, the cream will need to be checked in at the Centre and a medication form will need to be completed.

Home Care Providers will not accept a non-prescription topical cream if the contents include an identified allergen for any child enrolled in the program. Homemade treatments, essential oils or topical creams will not be administered.

For children who have an anaphylactic allergy, severe asthma, diabetes, or seizures an Individual Protocol will be established between the parents and the Director and reviewed with providers.

All ongoing medication information and protocols must be reviewed, signed, and dated by the parent **annually** or if changes are made, to ensure the information is accurate and up to date. We may ask you to follow specific guidelines to ensure the safety of all children in our care.

Tick Removal Policy & Procedures

The health and safety of your child is our top priority. Given our outdoor programming and natural play spaces, we recognize that children may come into contact with ticks. To ensure timely care, we require parents to provide standing permission for staff to remove a tick if one is found on their child during the day.

Parental Permission
If a parent or guardian has not provided written permission for staff to remove a tick, the parent will be contacted immediately and required to pick up their child to perform the removal themselves. We encourage all families to provide consent to avoid unnecessary disruptions to the child's day and to ensure the tick is removed as quickly as possible.

Staff Removal Procedures

When a tick is discovered on a child, trained staff will follow these steps to ensure safe removal:

- **Safe Removal:** Staff will use fine-tipped tweezers or a tick key to grab the tick as close to the skin as possible, pulling it out straight and gently.
- **Gentle Handling:** Staff will avoid squeezing or crushing the tick to prevent the spread of germs.
- **Sanitization:** The bite area will be cleaned thoroughly with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
- **Standard Methods:** We do not use home remedies (such as heat or petroleum jelly). Only tweezers or a tick key will be used for removal.
- **Storage & Identification:** The tick will be placed in a small, secure container or plastic bag and provided to the parent at pick-up. This allows parents to seek further identification or medical advice if they choose.

Tick Identification Resources

While the centre does not test ticks for Lyme disease, we recommend parents use the following resources for identification.

Public health staff can **help identify ticks** during office hours, but ***there is no testing for Lyme disease in the tick***. You can use eTick, an online tick identification service. Here's how:

- Take a clear photo of the tick
- **Upload the photo to the eTick website**
- eTick will identify the tick within 48 hours and send you helpful public health advice

You can also **check the eTick map to see ticks identified in your area**

Immunization

Under the Childcare and Early Years Act, Medical Officers of Health must have an immunization record on file for children in licensed childcare Centre. Having a child's record on file will also help Southwestern Public Health find out who is at risk if there is an outbreak. If there is an outbreak, children who do not have proof of immunization or immunity may not be allowed at the home until it is over, or they are immunized.

If children are not immunized for medical or personal reasons, an exemption form is required to be on file.

The operator of a licensed childcare centre forwards all immunization records and updates to Southwestern Public Health. A Public Health Nurse meets yearly with licensed childcare centre operators to review the immunization records for all children who are currently enrolled in the Centre.
If a child is overdue for any immunizations, the Public Health Nurse will provide a letter to the operator of the childcare centre to give to the parent/guardian.
If the immunization has still not been completed by the date on the letter, your child may not be able to attend childcare until the immunization is given.

Every time your child receives an immunization, please forward the information to:
The childcare Centre at: admin@earlylearningcentre.ca
The Southwestern Public Health at: www.swpublichealth.ca/vaccineswork

Illness of a Child

The Childcare and Early Years Act requires that:

- Prior to admission, each child must be immunized according to the local medical officer of health.
- When a child is ill, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately and is required to pick up their child from the program to protect the interest of the sick child and to prevent further infection.

EHCC follows the guidelines set out by Southwestern Public Health. If your child becomes ill during the program and is unable to actively participate in program activities, they will be isolated from the rest of the group. Care will be provided until you can be contacted, and your child can be taken home. If we are unable to contact you, we will telephone the emergency contacts on your child's registration form and request that they pick your child up from the Centre. We would then continue to try and contact you to inform you of the situation.

Fever-reducing medications mask symptoms and do not allow caregivers to properly monitor the wellness of your child. If your child requires fever-reducing medications to participate in their day, they will not be accepted into care.

Southwester Public Health requires that we follow health and safety guidelines. The following are examples of conditions where children **will not** be accepted into care, or **will be** sent home:

- Fever of 38.4 C or 101 F or greater, using underarm thermometer **(required to stay home 24 hours symptom free)**

- Diarrhea **(2 episodes unless the first is accompanied by other symptoms, required to stay home for 24 hours symptom Free)**
- Vomiting **(2 episodes unless the first is accompanied by other symptoms, required to stay home for 24 hours symptoms free)**
- Undiagnosed skin rash/condition
- Communicable disease
- Discharge from ears or eyes
- Head lice
- Administration, prior to arrival, of fever-reducing medication due to fever
- Fever of 38.4 C or 101 F or greater, using underarm thermometer **(required to stay home 24 hours symptom free)**

If the Centre is experiencing an outbreak that includes vomit and/or diarrhea, children will be sent home immediately after one bout of diarrhea or vomiting and must remain home until they are symptom free for 48 hrs.

Outdoor Learning

Experiences in nature are very important to the development of young children. Outdoor experiences enhance physical health, intellectual development, and emotional well-being, and increase focus and academic achievement. Learning outdoors provides opportunities for curiosity and wonder and provides a different and meaningful learning environment.

Our daily program schedule allows children the opportunity to participate in outdoor activities every morning and afternoon. To help your child feel comfortable and ready to explore and learn in the outdoors, we ask that you provide appropriate clothing for the weather each day i.e.: rain boots, raincoats, and splash pants for wet days: snow pants, boots, hats, extra mittens, etc. for cold, snowy days.

It is advised to keep an extra set of clothing on site for our child so that children have the freedom to explore and create while eliminating the stress of getting dirty or wet. All items must be clearly labeled with your child's name. Every effort will be made to locate misplaced or missing items; however, we cannot be responsible for lost items.

During the summer months, children must wear a hat, preferably with a wide brim or neck flap to protect their sensitive ears and neck.
We request that you provide a bottle of sunscreen to the program to help ensure that your child is protected from the harmful rays of the sun. Due to allergies and skin sensitivities, the sunscreen must be in the original container, clearly labeled

with your child's name. We recommend using a broad-spectrum UVA and UVB sunscreen, with SPF #30 or higher. Please ensure your sunscreen does not contain any nut ingredients. As there is a waiting time for the sunscreen to become effective, we request that you apply sunscreen on your child, prior to coming to the program.

Standing Bodies of Water

The Ministry of Education prohibits the use of and access to all standing bodies of water on the Providers Premises during operating hours. All homes that have standing bodies of water/swimming pools are in compliance with local by-laws requiring private residences with standing bodies of water/pools etc. in their catchment area to have an enclosure (e.g., fence and a latched gate).
Elgin Home Childcare encourages the use of local splash pads, in home sprinklers, hoses or water tables, under close supervision of adults at all times, as safer alternatives during cooling or play/sensory activities.

Excursions

Excursions enrich and expand the curriculum and strengthen observation skills by immersing children in sensory activities while expanding their awareness of their own community.

Regular outings are to be within city limits not exceeding 30kms, however parents may sign a Special outing consent form giving permission for a provider to take a program child out of city limits, and will be provided in advance of the excursion, informing you of the destination, time, date, and entrance fee. If there is a fee required, then you will be responsible for paying for the cost of the trip prior to the event date. Safety- approved infant/child restrain seats must be used at all times. The child restraint systems must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions for installation and use. Parents must check with the provider that the car seat is properly tethered and adjusted.

Periods of Rest

The well-being of all children in our programs is supported through programming that supports each child's varied psychological and biological rhythms by providing materials, time, and space for active play, rest, and quiet time.

Rest is an important part of the day for all children. The need for sleep and/or rest time varies greatly among children. Toddlers and preschool-aged children may sleep for up to two hours daily. If children are unable to sleep after twenty minutes, they are to get up from their cots to participate in quiet activities for the remainder of the period.

All infants under 12 months of age will be placed on their backs for sleep until they are able to roll from their backs to their stomachs or sides on their own. Any request to place an infant in a different position for sleep ie, on their side or stomach will require a written letter from the child's physician. A copy of EHCC's sleep policy will be available to parents at the time of registration/orientation.

Further to the Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada, parents have the choice if they would like their infant child (age 0 – 17 months) to rest in a playpen or on a cot. At 18 months, children must rest on a cot. Please inform the Director of your child's sleep preferences and/or required accommodations. We work in partnership with parents to ensure that the duration of each child's rest period while participating in our program does not disrupt normal sleep patterns at home.

Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions

On a monthly basis, the Director, or designate visits the program to observe and document compliance with the implementation of program policies and procedures, Program Statement goals and approaches, and individuals Support Plans.
Follow-up support as required.

Prohibited Practices

At no time with respect to a child receiving childcare at a childcare Centre, it operates or at premises where it oversees the provision of childcare. Will not allow the use of:

(a) Corporal punishment of the child.
(b) Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct and prescribed sexual acts (as defined under the Early Childhood Education Act, 2007
(c) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller, or other devices 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.

(d) locking the exits of the childcare Centre or home childcare 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.

(e) 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.

(f) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding; or

(g) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

EHCC stresses the importance of children's emotional development. Children should never be discouraged from expressing their feelings; instead, they should be taught how to express them constructively rather than resort to physical aggression/violence.

Situations should be discussed with children so that they may gain an understanding of the problem. If another child is involved both children should be taken aside, and each child should be encouraged to express his/her feelings. Educators can help Infants and Toddlers who are feeling aggressive by giving them the words or hand signs to express what they are feeling.

Fire Drill

Fire drills are practiced once per month. Fire drills are recorded, and evacuation procedures are posted is a detailed outline of the emergency procedures as well as the evacuation site.

Licensing

Licenses are obtained through the Ministry of Education (MEDU) to operate our Agency. Our Home childcare providers are not licensed but contracted by EHCC to provide a form of licensed childcare. The program is inspected and licensed annually, and a license is issued upon successful completion of the licensing procedure. Signage must also be place at ach approved Providers home. More information about licensing is available on the Ministry website at ww.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents.

Parent/ Provider Agreement

Home Childcare is offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, mutually agreed upon by the Caregivers and Parents.

An interview between you and the provider will help ensure that you make a good childcare choice for you and your child. Each provider is unique to the business hrs. offered. Please feel free to ask your provider about menu items served, sleeping environments, indoor/outdoor activities, community outings and walks and the Lillio program for daily updates.
Before your child can begin care you need to receive the registration package.

You and your provider will be working in partnership to ensure the best possible care for your child. Good Communication and mutual respect are essential to this partnership. Please take time to share with your provider any changes to routine care and set time with your provider to discuss your child's care. We offer families the Lillio program for daily updates and messaging.

Back up care Guidelines

On occasion your home childcare provider may have an approved back up provider available for appointments during operating hrs. The approved back up provider has a valid Standard First Aid certificate, a satisfactory Vulnerable Screening check, and a signed back up consent form on file.

If a Caregiver is unavailable, the option for alternate care may be available for families. Our program cannot guarantee that alternate care can be arranged therefore we recommend parents have a reliable person available if possible.

When childcare is not available for your scheduled day, the Provider will mark "Z" in the attendance log indicating that they were not available, and you will not be required to pay for the day.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Departure

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide home childcare providers, staff (e.g., home childcare visitor, home childcare agency administrators, etc.), students and volunteers with a clear direction as to what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the home childcare premises as expected, as well as procedures to follow to ensure the safe arrival and dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Policy and Procedures

Accepting a child into care

The home childcare provider is responsible for signing children in on the attendance record as children arrive at the home premises where care is provided.

The home childcare provider is responsible for ensuring any communication from parents/guardians related to drop-off or absences is noted on the daily written record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child does not arrive at the home childcare premises and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off or that the child will be absent (e.g., left a voice message or advised the home childcare provider at pick-up) the home childcare provider must:
    - contact the child's parent/guardian no later than 1hr after the child's expected arrival time. Home childcare providers shall contact the parent/guardian and will send an email via Centre's program app; Home childcare provider will also place a phone call to the parent/guardian or text message. If Providers are unable to make contact with the parent/guardian within one (1) hour of message sent, home childcare provider will contact supervisor or director to inform them of the absent child.
    - if no response is received from parent home childcare agency must call at least once and leave message, must contact an adult to confirm absence etc.
    - If still unable to make contact with parent/guardian the following day will contact emergency contacts.

2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, home childcare provider shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

The home childcare provider shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or another individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child may be released to.

Where the home childcare provider does not know the individual picking up the child, the home childcare provider must ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization provided by parent/guardian.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived 30mins after expected arrival time the home childcare provider shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. If the Provider is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the Provider will begin contacting authorized individuals listed on the child's emergency contact form.
3. Where the home childcare provider is the person contacting the parent/guardian and they have been unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the home childcare provider shall notify home childcare agency.
4. Where the home childcare provider or home care agency is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., emergency contacts) by 1hr after expected pick up time. The home childcare provider shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 5196-631-1492. The home provider shall follow CAS's direction with respect to next steps. The home childcare provider shall also advise the home childcare agency.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Option 1: Home childcare provider will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

Option 2: Where a parent/guardian has provided written and signed authorization for their school age child to be released from care without supervision to the school property, home childcare provider must be responsible for dismissing the child from care. Prior to dismissing the child from care, the home childcare provider shall review the written instructions for release provided by the parent/guardian and release the child at the time set out in the instructions. The home childcare provider shall document the time of departure from care.

Change of Care

ELC/EHCC requires two weeks' notice for a reduction in care or a change in our start date. Request for an change of care will only be possible if your home childcare provider is in agreement and the office is made aware of the changes.

Days may not be switched due to illness, vacations, Public Holidays, or inclement weather.

Withdrawal from the Program

We require that you notify the Director in writing two weeks prior to withdrawing your child from any program. Fees will be charged for the two weeks' notice whether or not your child attends.

Please note, if you receive subsidized care, you are also responsible for providing two weeks' notice to Children's Services as well.

A refund will be issued for any resulting overpayment, provided the required two weeks' notice is given. In lieu of notice, two weeks' fees will be required.

A space cannot be guaranteed if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child. In the event of a temporary withdrawal, you will need to place your child's name on the waiting list. Spaces will not be held in the event of a lengthy absenteeism (e.g. summer months, pregnancy leave)

For parents enrolled for Pre-Authorized Debit, a notice of your child's withdrawal must be received two weeks in advance to ensure the cancellation of your next scheduled automatic withdrawal.

Changes in Registration

Please relay any changes in your child's registration to the Director immediately. In the event of an emergency, your child's safety could depend on the accuracy of this information ie; address, phone number, work information, and emergency contacts. When changes occur, you will be requested to sign and date the updated registration form as verification of accuracy.

Office Closures

The Office may close due to severe inclement weather conditions, power failure, or circumstances beyond our control. If during the program hours the Centre is not able to operate due to power failure or similar circumstances, you will be contacted immediately.

Statutory Holidays/Program Closure Days

EHCC observes the following statutory and non-statutory holidays; Please speak to your home childcare provider regarding availability of care If required.

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

If any of the holidays above fall on your child's regular scheduled day to attend, you will be invoiced for that day at the daily rate. If your child is not regularly scheduled on that day, you will not be invoiced for the day.

Our Office will be closed the week between Christmas Eve and New Year's each year.

Each year Early Learning Programs recognize one (1) PD Day for all Elgin Home Childcare Providers. EHCC Provider's homes will be closed on that day. Parents will receive notice of the PD Days and closures one month prior to the date.

Supervision of Students and Volunteers

Volunteers and students may participate in a childcare opportunity by fulfilling the requirements of the Vulnerable Sector Check, participating in a Policy and Procedure review, and at the discretion of EHCC. All volunteers and students participating in a childcare opportunity will be under the direct supervision of educators/home care providers and will never be left alone with the children. All students and volunteers will participate in tasks and responsibilities that are directly related to their school's curriculum/volunteer positions.

Serious Occurrence Notification

The safety and well-being of your children is our highest priority, however, despite all the best precautions, incidents can sometimes happen. A "Serious Occurrence Notification Form" will be posted in a visible area on site, for 10 days, when an incident occurs that is deemed a serious occurrence, as per the government's definition. A serious occurrence does not mean that the program is out of compliance with licensing requirements or that the children are at risk at the Centre/Homes.

Attendance and/or Sign-In/Out

The Provider will keep track of your child's attendance on attendance tracking form. Any date that your child is not contracted to be in care should be blank. At the end of each month, you will be required to sign and verify that you agree with the record and consent to cover the costs incurred.

When childcare provider is not available for your scheduled day, the Provider will mark "Z" in the attendance log indicating that they were not available, and you will not be required to pay for the day. (Legend Codes are on the bottom of the attendance record)

Request for copies of attendance, and sign-in/out must be made in writing by the requesting parent's legal counsel. There will be a fee charged to the ordering party.

Smoke-Free Ontario Act

This act requires licensed programs to comply with this regulation; therefore, no person may smoke or hold lighted tobacco, smoke, or hold lighted medical cannabis, smoke or hold a designed product or substance, or use an electronic cigarette, in any location where childcare is provided by EHCC, whether or not children are present.

Registration

Registration and Orientation Procedure

We request that you visit the Centre/Home Care prior to enrollment to meet with the Director, review your registration forms and observe the program. Your child should accompany you to familiarize him or her with the Provider and the surroundings. The full registration package must be completed prior to your child participating in the program.

- All forms must be fully completed prior to your child's start date.
- Parent/Guardian #1 listed on the registration form will receive all written correspondence. This parent will also be issued the annual income tax receipt by the end of February. Should you request a duplicate income tax receipt beyond the past calendar year, there will be a **non-base fee of $20.00** which is **non-refundable** charged to the account.
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Canada Wide Early Learning Childcare System

EHCC participates in the CWELCC system.

Elgin Home Childcare- Program Fees

Childcare fees will be based on the Canada Wide Early Childcare System Agreement.

January – December 2026 Homecare	**Newborn – 18 months**	**19 months – 30 months**	**31 months – 5years**	**6 years – 12 years**	
Base Fee					
Full time Daily Fee	$22.00	$19.85	$18.43	$39.00	
Part time Daily Fee	$22.00	$19.85	$18.43	$39.00	
Half Day Full Time	$12.29	$12.00	$12.00	$24.00	
Half Day Part Time	$12.29	$12.00	$12.00	$24.00	

January – December 2026 Homecare Fees	JK/SK 4-5 years	
Base Fee		
JK/SK Before School	$12.00	
JK/SK After School	$12.00	
Preschool Full Time	$18.43	
JK/SK Part Time Before School	$12.00	
JK/SK Part Time After School	$12.00	
School Age Before School 6-12 years	$15.00	
School Age After School 6-12 years	$15.00	

Non-Base Fees

Monthly late fee - 2.5% charge - will be applied to any outstanding balances.
Late Fee - $10.00 for every 15 minutes or portion thereof
Field Trips – as applicable
Beyond Calendar Year Child Care Tax Receipts - $20.00

Outstanding Balance

At the Early Learning Centre, we rely on the timely payment of fees to maintain our high standards of care and operational stability. Families with an outstanding balance exceeding 30 days will receive a formal notification and a letter outlining available repayment options to help get the account back in good standing.

If an account remains 60 days past due without a formal repayment plan in place, the following actions will be taken:

- Childcare services will be terminated immediately.
- The outstanding account will be referred to a third-party collection agency.
- All applicable interest, administrative fees, and legal/court costs will be added to the total balance owed.

We encourage any family experiencing financial difficulty to contact the Finance Manager early to discuss a proactive solution

Refund/Credit Policy

Operating costs are based on the number of children enrolled in our programs and these expenses exist whether children attend their scheduled days or not. Our fees are based on holding a guaranteed child care space. This means that even when a child is away, we continue to maintain the space for them, so it is available when they return. This ensures consistent care and allows us to maintain appropriate educator-to- child ratio.

Childcare fee refunds and credits are **not applicable** and will **not be processed** for any:

- Unscheduled program closures, this includes inclement weather closures.
- Absences from care related to missed days, sick days and/or vacation.
- Withdrawal notifications from the program were made with less than 10 business days' notice.

Payment of fees are due on the 15th business day of each month.

Payment Methods

Monthly invoices are finalized by the 10th of each month for the previous month's care. Payment is due on the 15th of the current month. Parents are responsible for reviewing their monthly invoices through their Digibot account to ensure they are aware of upcoming charges.

Important Notice: All families are required to provide and maintain current banking or credit card information on the Digibot Parent Portal. To ensure the safety and continuity of our operations, if payment information is not active in Digibot, childcare services will not be provided.

Accounts are to be paid in full by:

- Visa, Mastercard, or American Express
- Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD)

Please note that the Early Learning Centre does not accept e-transfers for childcare payments.

All Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD) or Credit Card (CC) forms must be completed on the Digibot Parent Portal at the time of registration. Automatic withdrawals for your child's monthly childcare fees will be processed on the first business day of each month.

Should you anticipate an issue with your payment, please contact the Finance Manager at finance@earlylearningcentre.ca with sufficient notice.

Termination of Care

If there are any issues that are brought to our attention by our staff, parents/ guardians, a meeting may be scheduled to address the concerns. The meeting will involve the director, Provider and the parent/guardian. The concern(s) will be clearly noted and discussed throughout the meeting. A plan will be designed to solve the issue(s) and a second meeting will be arranged to reassess the situation after a week has passed. If the issue(s) is still not resolved to the satisfaction of everyone involved, a 2-week written notice of termination of services will be issued.

Services may be terminated by the Agency if policies are not followed, fees are not paid, or if the program is unsuitable for your child.

Elgin Home Childcare Providers are self-contracted with the Early Learning Centre. Two weeks' written notice will be provided to the family in situations where both parties are unable to come to a solution.

Late Fees

Please notify your Provider if any unexpected delays occur. There will be a late fee of 10.00 charged every 15 minutes or a portion thereof. In the event of excessive late pickups, care may be discontinued.

Childcare Fee Subsidy

If you are receiving a childcare fee subsidy, assistance will continue based on approval from your subsidy provider (St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services). You must notify our subsidy provider:

- To arrange approval if your child will be absent **five** or more consecutive days ie: illness or vacation.

- To arrange approval for consistent absent days ie: every Monday
- To arrange approval for a change in your child's enrollment, transfer to another program or home care provider
- When you withdraw your child from care
- If there are changes to your address, phone number, or employment information.

Note: if you do not receive prior approval for any of the above situations, subsidy will not pay for these absent days or changes, and you will be responsible for paying all full fees to the Early Learning Centre directly. Refer to the information sheet that you received from your subsidy provider for further details.

If you are interested in Childcare Fee Subsidy, please contact St. Thomas-Elgin Social Services, childcare intake at 519-631-9350 option #3.

Waitlist Policy

This policy and the procedures within the Waitlist Policy provide for the waiting list to be administered in a transparent manner. It supports the availability of information about the waiting list for prospective parents in a way that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of children.

The procedures provide steps that will be followed to place children on the waiting list, offer admission, and provide parents with information about their child's application on the waiting list.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for a childcare agency that maintains a waiting list to have related policies and procedures.

General

- Elgin Home Childcare will strive to accommodate all requests for the registration of a child at the childcare agency.
- Where the maximum capacity of a program has been reached and spaces are unavailable for new children to be enrolled, the waiting list procedures set out below will be followed.
- No fee will be charged to parents for placing a child on the waiting list.

Receiving a Request to Place a Child on the Waiting List

1. The licensee or designate will receive parental requests to place children on a waiting list via email, phone or in person. The link for the website will be emailed to the family to create a profile on the waiting list.

Placing a child on the Waiting List

1. When your child's application is received, they will be placed on the wait list in chronological order, based on the date and time that the request was received.

2. As a profile is accepted on the waitlist, the Director of Children's services will send out an email confirming receipt of application for childcare agency.

Determining Placement Priority when a Space Becomes Available

1. When space becomes available in the program, priority will be given to chronological order of application date with consideration to existing families and staff children.

2. Once these children have been placed, other children on the waiting list will be prioritized based on program availability and the chronology in which the child was placed on the waiting list.

Offering an Available Space

1. Parents of children on the waiting list will be notified via phone that a space has become available in their requested program.

2. Where a parent has not responded within the given time frame, the licensee or designate will contact the parent of the next child on the waiting list to offer them the space.

3. Enrollment and registration in each home childcare environment is dependent upon a variety of factors such as physical space, needs of the family, and the dynamics of the program.

Responding to Parents who inquire about their Child's Placement on the Waiting List

1. The Director will be the contact person for parents who wish to inquire about the status of their child's place on the waiting list.

2. The Director will respond to parent inquiries and provide the child's current position on the list and an estimated likelihood of the child being offered a space in the program.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

1. The waiting list will be maintained in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of the children and families on the list and therefore only the child's position on the waiting list will be provided to parents.

2. Names of other children or families and/or their placement on the waiting list will not be shared with other individuals.

Pandemic Emergency Management Practices

In the event of a Pandemic, EHCC will refer to the Pandemic Policies that are in place and aligned with the Ministry of Education and Southwestern Public Health. When Pandemic Policies are updated, parents will receive an update of the policy. If you would like to view the Pandemic Emergency Management policy, please send an email to admin@earlylearningcentre.ca

Emergency Management

Hazards and mitigation efforts will be communicated to families in a timely manner through communication methods including, but not limited to, Lillio, and/or email.

Resource Links

Ministry of Education Information on Child Care www.edu.gov.on.ca/childare

How Does Learning Happen? Document www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf

Southwest Public Health https://www.swpublichealth.ca/

Health Canada www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/index-eng.php

Elgin Home Childcare

Elgin Home Childcare	200 Peach Tree Blvd	519-631-7018