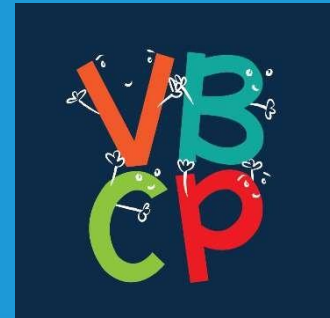


# PARENT HANDBOOK

Village of Brooklin Co-operative Playschool

437.223.8608 [www.vbcplayschool.ca](http://www.vbcplayschool.ca)



## Table of Contents

Pg 2	Our Teachers
Pg 3	The Curriculum
Pg 4	The Preschool Experience
Pg 6	Important Policies
Pg 10	Program Statement

## What sets our school apart?

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool strives to deliver stimulating learning experiences in a safe and nurturing environment that work to enhance a child's social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development. This enhancement happens throughout a child's daily routine which encompasses a balance of purposeful play, inquiry based provocations, gross motor and fine motor activities, nutrition breaks and both planned and spontaneous learning opportunities. Play is the cornerstone of our curriculum – understood to be essential to the healthy social and cognitive development of children. Our curriculum embodies a child initiated, adult-supported approach that focuses on play-based learning.

We see all children to be critical and competent learners. We encourage the child to take the lead and focus on his or her interests through intentional observation, interaction, and engaged communication. When this approach to learning takes place along with staff's understanding of child development, each child's learning and individual development is supported. As a result, the child's competence, capacity, and potential are maximized. Children flourish in all areas of development when they are in supportive, caring, and responsive relationships with adults whose focus is on their health, safety, nutrition and wellbeing. This is the foundation of our quality preschool program.



## Need More Info?

Check our website at [www.vbcplayschool.ca](http://www.vbcplayschool.ca) for the most up to date Policies and Procedures, Program Statement, Registration Package, Calendar and more!

## Hello from Ms. Becky



Hi I'm Becky and I'm thrilled to be the Supervising RECE at this wonderful school. I fell in love with the VBCP back in 2015 as a volunteer parent and more recently I had the opportunity to participate as a supply teacher. I'm a registered early childhood educator and have a diploma in early childhood education. Before deciding to pursue my passion as an early childhood educator, I earned my Bachelor of Business Administration and also had the opportunity to be a stay at home mom to my two fantastic kids. In my spare time, I enjoy reading, playing the clarinet in local musical productions, and exploring the outdoors.

I believe that early childhood is the most vital and significant period in the life of a human being. I feel honoured and privileged to be able to work with young children. Their well-being and learning must be the primary concern of any educator who is lucky enough to be working with them. As educators we must always keep in mind our responsibilities to the children in our care, their families, and to the community. We have as much to learn from young children as they have to learn from us, and I can't wait for the adventure to begin!

To Contact Ms. Becky, please email [msbecky@vbcplayschool.ca](mailto:msbecky@vbcplayschool.ca)

All VBCP staff and volunteers must adhere to a number of policies and procedures including Ministry of Education, Public Health and Durham Fire regulations. Annual review of these policies and procedures ensure our teaching team is knowledgeable and prepared to handle any situation. All VBCP staff including supply teachers hold current certification in Standard First Aid and CPR-C (Reg.58(2)) as well as a Vulnerable Sector check and Offence Declaration form completed annually.

## Hello from Ms. Ava

Hi! I'm Ava and I am thrilled to be joining the VBCP family on a full-time basis. I had the opportunity to supply for this wonderful little school back in 2019. Since then I have supplied and fulfilled contract positions with the DDSB in the FDK (Full Day Kindergarten) program. Prior to that I ran a personal home daycare, to be at home with my two boys during their early years.

I graduated with honours as a Registered Early Childhood Educator in 2007. I have worked with children in a variety of settings for over 20 years, ranging from a camp counsellor, ski instructor, nanny and finally as a RECE (also in a variety of settings; centre based care, home care and with the school board).

My family and I enjoy spending time outside exploring nature, we enjoy baseball and biking! In my spare time I love to read, spend time in the garden and even crafting once in a while. I am excited about this new opportunity, I can't wait to adapt and utilize both the knowledge and experiences I have acquired over last 18 months working with the school board, drawing on both of these to help foster a love for learning and inquiry for the young learner.



To Contact Ms. Ava, please email [msava@vbcplayschool.ca](mailto:msava@vbcplayschool.ca).



# The Curriculum

Our program is founded on an 'Emerging Curriculum' approach where activities evolve following the children's interests. Teachers still play a very important role and will guide your child based on their own unique abilities. Big ideas will still be met; however, it is process driven rather than product focused.

We believe children learn through hands on experimentation within their environment. Children are intrinsically motivated and are stimulated by new experiences. A child learns by repetition and through feedback from self and others. We encourage children to think of creative solutions independently or in collaboration with others. We believe there is no correct way of using materials and we encourage new approaches through process-oriented activities.

- Gain knowledge of colours, shapes, numbers, and letters in a fun, hands-on, play-based environment
- Experiment with paint, sand, clay, water, and other sensory materials
- Participate in simple science and nature activities
- Begin making a happy transition from home life to school life

## INCLUSION

Our goals are for children to take initiative as they make choices, play constructively and share their ideas with others. We acknowledge what the children are doing as we give language to the concepts they are experimenting with. With enough varied materials, children sort, classify, count objects, and figure out what is the same or different.

They learn problem-solving skills through constructive play and learn how to deal with conflicts. The children expand their math, language, thinking and social abilities as they concretely manipulate materials in the classroom and outdoors. They gain self-confidence as they share themselves with others Our curriculum is carefully designed to encourage children to:

- Develop an interest in the world around them, be curious and expand their knowledge
- Develop a love of music and books

Our goal is to provide an inclusive classroom environment to all of our community members. We will do our very best to integrate children with exceptionalities into the program with the same expectations as their classmates. Every child is equal, even if not created equal. Our goal is for children with special abilities to be included without undue attention being placed on them. It is important to include children with exceptionalities in a way that provides an overall positive learning experience from this interaction. Integration is possible when there is a low enough adult/child ratio which we are privileged to have at The Village of Brooklin Co-operative Playschool. Staff and parents have access to Special Needs resources, support and referrals for assessment through the Preschool Outreach Program offered from Grandview Children's Centre in Durham. If you have any concerns, comments or questions please don't hesitate to reach out to us at any time.

## The College of Early Childhood Educators

The College of Early Childhood Educators is the professional self-regulatory body for registered early childhood educators (RECE's) in Ontario. The College's role is to protect the public interest by setting requirements for registration, ethical and professional standards, and holding RECE's accountable for their practice. RECE's are trained in child development and the planning and delivery of play-based learning care programs. Both Ms. Becky and Ms. Ava are current members of the college in good standing. Find out more about the college by visiting [college-ece.ca](http://college-ece.ca) (Reg.53)

# The Preschool Experience

The VBCP is open from 8:30am to 4:00pm

Tuesday/Thursday AM Program- Currently Closed

Monday/Wednesday/Friday AM Program – Currently Closed

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday PM Program  
1pm-3:30pm



## DROP OFF

Due to health screening restrictions, parents are not permitted to enter the building. Please line up at the “entrance” and stand in line at a pylon. Once it is your child’s turn, the preschool teacher will come to greet them and invite them in. We ask that parents/ guardians say their goodbyes. In years past we have found it best if goodbyes are said quickly BUT never forgotten. When they enter, your child’s hands will be sanitized, and shoes will be changed.

## PICK UP

Due to health restrictions, please line up at the exit where the pylons are. One of the preschool teachers will bring your child to the door for pick up. We ask that parents/ guardians are following social distancing guidelines.

## WHEN SOMEONE ELSE PICKS UP YOUR CHILD

You are required to notify Ms. Becky or Ms. Ava, if someone other than the main contact person will be picking up your child. If this person is unknown to us, they will be required to show photo ID. The alternative person picking up your child must be over the age of 16 years.

## WHAT TO PACK

On your child’s first day please bring:

- A labelled backpack
- One complete change of clothing, labeled
- Comfortable, practical indoor shoes entering the classroom
- Diapers and wipes if required

**PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY DIAPER CREAMS, OINTMENTS, OR MEDICATIONS OF ANY KIND IN YOUR CHILD’S BACKPACK (must be given to staff)**

In accordance with the Ministry of Education and the CCEYA fines can be levied (up to \$1000) if medications, cosmetics, or food are left within reach of a child. If required, please let us know and we will provide you with the appropriate form and store the medication properly.

## CIRCLE TIME

Circle time is a fun way for kids to start or end each day. It provides consistency to each day, encouraging independence in children. Some circle time activities may include exposure to calendar counting, days of the week, seasons, singing songs large group discussions, inquiries, talking about the day’s adventures or inquiry related books and stories.

## CENTRES

Centres are a wonderful learning opportunity where children are given the option to visit a daily centre:

Discovery Centre - science and exploration.

Dramatic Play - dress up play, pretend kitchen/house play, manipulatives such as dinosaurs

Language/Writing: weekly letter focus, also utilizes games and books

Blocks/Legos encourages fine motor skill development and creativity

Music and Movement - singing songs, moving creatively along to music and making music with instruments.

Craft and Create - sometimes directed, sometimes free activity (skills used may include cutting, coloring, painting, gluing or stamping)

We always offer free choice art materials for the children to explore during center time along with a planned creative activity.



# The Preschool Experience

## MID-YEAR AND END OF YEAR PROGRESS REPORTS AND PORTFOLIOS

We will perform an end of the year progress report on your child. Our reports are aligned to our curriculum and are utilized by teachers to guide them in their lesson planning. We will share these evaluations with you so that you know how your child is performing in preschool. Please know that these progress evaluations are only a 'snap shot' of your child and with the portfolio, daily observations, discussions and parent feedback we are better able to see how your child is progressing and identify their abilities, interests and strengths.

We are always available to chat during school hours about your child's progress. If there is something that you would like to let us know please do not hesitate to email either teacher and we would be happy to set up a time to chat with you one on one.

## WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD AT THE VBCP

- Become familiar with the routines and transitions. Don't be afraid to ask for clarification or give the teachers feedback.
- Speak with us to find out what activities you can do at home with your child to support the development that is happening at school and vice versa. Let us know what is working well at home.
- Communication is key. Follow us on Facebook to stay informed and read about things that may have happened in your child's week at school.

## A GOOD START

A nutritious breakfast or lunch will help set your child up to have the best morning or afternoon possible at preschool. It will help them to concentrate and give them energy to play and learn. It will also help develop good eating patterns for the rest of their life. A snack will be provided mid program. Eating at preschool is an important part of the program and we try our best to promote happy and healthy eating habits. Snack provides a great learning and social opportunity for our children. Even though it is a simple refreshment it allows children to follow social cues, encouraged to use manners and build independence. Any allergies will be posted with a specific allergy plan determined with the parent and the supervisor. Please advise supervisor of any allergies and we will do our best to meet your needs. You may be required to bring in an allergy safe snack for your child if food requests cannot be met. The VBCP is a peanut and nut aware center.

## A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Children need a good sleep each night to be able to cope with the adventures and fun of preschool. A good sleep will help your child to:

- Pay attention and concentrate
- Problem solve and think of new ideas
- Play sensibly and enjoy their day.

## ROLE OF THE FAMILY

Parent volunteers are what makes the co-operative a success. Without your participation we couldn't provide the program we have been providing to our community for over 20 years. Your involvement is also a key element to the success of your child's experience in the VBCP program. Participation goes beyond covering your duty day (currently suspended at this time due to health restrictions)

Participation can include verbal or written feedback, sharing information about your child's development, attending meetings, workshops, fundraising events or volunteering behind the scenes by becoming involved with our Board of Directors.

## THE VBCP COMMITMENT TO ALL FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than form a negative or punitive approach to manage unwanted behaviours. Research from diverse fields of study show that children who attend preschool programs where they experience warm, supportive relationships are happier, less anxious and more motivated to learn than those who do not. Experiencing positive relationships in early childhood also has a significant long term impact on physical and mental health and success in school and beyond. The program offered by the VBCP is one in which we strive to support positive interactions between all.

## IMPORTANT POLICIES

### PROHIBITED PRACTICES

It is every staff and volunteer's **legal responsibility** to report suspected child abuse forthwith to the Children's Aid Society. VBCP will comply with the prohibited practices as outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Act, O. Reg 137/15, ss.45(c)

VBCP will follow all relevant legislation with respect to reporting suspected child abuse. Any practice based on a negative control technique goes against VBCPs Behaviour Management Policy. Prohibited practices include:

- corporal punishment
- use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- depriving basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will
  - confinement which includes locking the exits of the child care centre for the purposes of confining a child
  - using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children
  - physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to any device (stroller or highchair) 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

Educators, students and volunteers must read, sign and follow the prohibited practices policy within the policies and procedures document. The performance of a prohibited practice, as specified above, will justify immediate for-cause termination of employment in the case of a teacher, or immediate cessation of Duty Day volunteer privileges in the case of a Duty Day participant. Any participating family asked to switch to non-participating due to the contravention of Prohibited Practice would be subject to fees related to a non-participating status. The supervisor will ensure that a written record of the monitoring of all employees, volunteers and placement student's child guidance practices is completed immediately following an observed or reported prohibited practice. All written records of monitoring will be kept on file for three years.

### EXCURSIONS

Throughout the year, field trips are made to places of special interest. Each class may have different field trips at different times, depending on the interests of the class. A notice will be sent home in advance of the excursion informing parents of the destination, time and date. Impromptu excursions to the library, tobogganing, etc. will be discussed prior to arranging and a confidential survey sent out before deciding a 'last minute excursion' would take place.

Excursions will be "pay as you go." The cost per child will be determined based on the activity that they are participating in. Parent/guardians are responsible for transportation of their own child or arranging transportation with another family, and parents are required to stay and supervise their children during all excursions. The school's insurance policy covers the children while they are participating in a school activity outside the school.

### WAITLIST

In accordance with O.Reg.137/15, s.75 the VBCP maintains a no-charge wait list should the school be filled to capacity. To be placed on the list, please call or e-mail us to add your name to the waiting list. The day that you call and leave a message or send your email will be your seniority date on the waiting list. There may be some turnover in registrations during the school year, once there is a confirmed withdrawal, the registrar will contact the parents/guardians, with children on the Waiting List, in sequential order. This means the family with the highest seniority date will have first official offer of the available space, depending on age of child.

Once your child is officially offered a space, if you would like to accept it, you will be given a period of 7 business days to enroll your child. For all children that are accepted into the VBCP program they are required to pay a \$100 registration fee. Once contacted and the VBCP has not heard back by end of day 7, the open spot will be offered to the next family on the list. You will still remain on the centers list until you have asked us to take you off. The wait list status will only be available by phoning and speaking to the registrar. In order to maintain privacy of all potential families, we will only disclose to the parent/guardian their child's position on the Waiting List.

Please provide the following information for you file on the waiting list:

- Parents first and last names
- Best contact telephone number(s) and email addresses
- Your expected start month
- Your earliest start month you will consider (you are willing to start in March, but you really need the space for May)
- Your child's name
- Date of Birth
- If there are any changes to your contact information please contact the centre to update your file.

Phone: 437.223.8608 Email: [registrar@vbcplayschool.ca](mailto:registrar@vbcplayschool.ca)

### WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Written notice must be given should you wish to withdraw your child from the Centre. The centre must receive this notice by the 15th of the month in order to process the return of the following months' cheques. If notice is not given before the 15th of the month, the fee for the following month will be kept and the remaining cheques will be returned. The Board of Directors reserves the right to suspend or withdraw services if the rules of VBCP are not followed or if the behaviour of the child or the family interferes with the Centre's programs and hours.

When problems are observed, the following steps will ensue:

- If minor infractions of the rules or behavioural problems occur a verbal warning from the Supervisor and/or the staff and clarification of the Centre's policies; all verbal warnings will be documented and placed in the child's file
- a report of the behaviour or a serious incident will result in the Board of Directors being notified while ensuring the confidentiality of the family, as well, a written warning will be sent to the family
- the family and/or the Board of Directors may request a meeting to follow up on the written warning
- in the case of a serious incident, a plan that is mutually agreeable to the Centre and the family may be required before the child is re-admitted to the Centre
- three written warnings within a 12-month period will result in withdrawal of services by the Centre
- in the case of serious incidents, the Board of Directors reserves the right to withdraw services; if there are further violations of the Centre's policies during this period, the child will be withdrawn immediately
- the Supervisor or the Board of Directors will follow up with the Children's Services consultant, as required

### Duty to Report

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool has a legal obligation to report any suspicions of child abuse to the Children's Aid Society.

### Storm Policy

The Supervisor in conference with the board of directors has both the authority and responsibility to act in the interests of the Centre and the children in their care. If weather conditions warrant an early closing time, the Centre will contact all families and ask for their co-operation in picking up their children. If the weather conditions are bad and you are concerned, please do not hesitate to call the Centre to inquire about any emergency plans. If the weather conditions result in the landlord closing the school, the Centre will be closed.

### Illness & Emergency Procedure

If a student becomes ill during the school day and is unable to participate in activities, the parent/guardian will be notified. If a student is hurt, a member of the staff or an authorized person will administer immediate first aid. If the situation should require immediate medical attention, the program director or a member of the staff will attempt to contact and inform the parent/guardian as soon as possible. In the event that the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called. It is imperative that all your information is kept up to date. Please inform Ms. Becky immediately of any changes.

### Statutory Holidays

The VBCP is closed for all statutory holidays including Easter Monday. The VBCP is also closed for winter and March break aligning with the DDSB regular elementary calendar. Please visit our website for our current calendar

### Minor Accident Reporting

Minor accidents and illnesses are common occurrences with children. Ms. Becky, Ms. Ava and supply staff are trained in standard first aid and child/infant CPR, to enable us to handle minor and more serious injuries that may occur in our program. Rest assured it is mainly scrapes and bumps. As RECE's we both have the responsibility to report even the most minor of incidents and accidents. If an accident or behavioural incident does take place you will receive a copy of an incident/accident reporting form by the end of the class. (Reg.36(4)).

### Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event the VBCP premises are not available for a limited time due to an emergency situation, the staff and children will be relocated to the following site: WINCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL, 70 WATFORD STREET L1M 1E8 (905)655-7142

### What to do if your child is sick

- Please see our Policies and Procedures for information on our current Health and Safety Practices.
- An online screening form must be completed each day before your child attends the program
- If your child will be unable to attend the preschool program please call the center at 437.223.8608 or email [msbecky@vbcplayschool.ca](mailto:msbecky@vbcplayschool.ca) prior to their assigned class. Also, if your child is ill please inform us of their ailment so we can keep track and ensure public health regulations are being met.

Remember that some illnesses are very infectious. To stop them spreading to other children, please see your doctor and keep your child home for the advised period of time. If you are unsure if your child should stay home please contact Ms. Becky or Ms. Ava





## Current Tuition Fees 2020-2021 school year

T/Th AM:	\$161	\$305*
MWF AM:	\$209	\$368*
M-Th PM:	\$246	\$399*
Monthly fees		

\*non-participating fee



### SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

Reference: Child Care and Early Years Act, O. Reg. 137/15, ss.48-51 Volunteers are the parent/guardians, grandparents, caregivers of children enrolled at The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool and any student approved from the supervisor and Board of Directors. Such volunteers are referred to as "Duty Parents" or "Co-op Students" and provide enriching opportunities for the children under the direction of the teachers.

In order to support the well-being and safety of all children at the school, the following criteria applies:

- Duty Parents must be at least 18 years of age.
- No Duty Parent shall be left unsupervised with the children (except in the instance where two participating parents take the place of an unqualified staff member for the purposes of staff/child ratios, based on Ministry Director approval).
- Duty Parents must provide a completed vulnerable person Criminal Reference Check prior to volunteering in the classroom.
- Duty Parents must attend a Duty Training night in September of each school year to review the Policies and Procedures, namely the Behaviour Management and Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policies. In the event that a Duty Parent's child is enrolled in the school subsequent to this date, such Duty Parent must meet with the teachers in advance of his/her volunteering in the classroom to ensure a complete review of the Policies and Procedures.

Duty Parents must submit an executed Allergy and Anaphylaxis Acknowledgement, an executed and witnessed Behaviour Management Acknowledgement, an executed Confidentiality Agreement and an executed V.B.C.P. Medical Certification

**\*Duty Days are suspended at this time due to COVID-19.**

### FEES

VBCP is a not-for-profit co-operative preschool, and as such childcare fees are based on the actual cost of operation. These costs are reviewed annually and fees are set accordingly. The fee schedule, provided by the Registrar, outlines the fees for full and partial-year programs, as well as for participating and non-participating families. Fees for nonparticipating families are higher to cover the additional costs of providing an assistant to maintain the adult to child ratio.

A non-refundable fee is to be paid with each application form submitted (\$100). This application fee typically applies to the school year for which the application is made. The Registrar will notify the families in writing of their acceptance.

The Fee is comprised of the following:

- Non-refundable membership fee of \$45.00
- Non-refundable processing fee of \$15.00
- Non-refundable Insurance fee of \$40.00

There is a \$30.00 administration charge for any returned N.S.F. cheques, and this charge is due upon notification. If two consecutive cheques are returned from the bank, further payments must be made by cash, certified cheque or money order. Those with delinquent accounts of sixty days may be asked to remove their child from the program. As our operational costs do not change, fees will not be refunded or pro-rated should your child be absent for any reason (including illness or vacations), or for statutory holidays.

## VILLAGE OF BROOKLIN COOPERATIVE PLAYSCHOOL PROGRAM STATEMENT

Welcome to The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool; a licensed non-profit preschool program. Our program statement is intended to describe how our program will support, foster and create a unique and positive early learning experience for our community, your child and our families at large. Its purpose is to share with you the VBCP's view of the child, our philosophy, and the pedagogy used. We attempt to share with you the importance of playing to learn as well as the goals and approaches used to ensure that healthy child development will take place.

It will also outline how the beliefs shared within this document are evaluated and maintained, and how we support our educators and children while doing so.

The VBCP's program statement will be reviewed, discussed and shared annually with all its members and educators to ensure it aligns with not only the VBCP's beliefs but the Minister of Education's Policy Statement.

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool strives to deliver stimulating learning experiences in a safe and nurturing environment that works to enhance a child's social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development. This enhancement happens throughout a child's daily routine which encompasses a balance of purposeful play, inquiry based in provocations, gross and fine motor activities, nutrition breaks, and both planned and spontaneous learning opportunities. Play is the cornerstone of our curriculum – understood to be essential to the healthy social and cognitive development of children. Our intention is to provide a stimulating environment that allows the best possible play for all children in our care. We endeavour to meet the play needs of all children and so whatever possible to support the natural urge to play. Play is a natural vehicle that propels learning and development. Our curriculum takes a child initiated, adult-supported approach that focuses on play-based learning.

VBCP educators and volunteers understand the importance of play. They foster, expand, and scaffold this natural talent that is play by being:

- Reflective partners
- Active participants
- Keen observers
- Planners
- Collaborators
- Providing an environment for inquiry, curiosity and self-lead and adult supported learning to take place
- Designs a flexible daily schedule that meets the needs of all the children and provides a balance of activities throughout the day

We see all children to be critical and competent learners, allowing the child to take the lead and focusing on his or her interests through intentional observation, interaction and engaged communication. When this approach to learning takes place along with staff's understanding of child development, each child's learning and individual development is supported. As a result the child's competence, capacity and potential are maximized. We know that children flourish in all areas of development when they are in supportive, caring and responsive relationships with adults whose focus is on the health, safety, nutrition, and well being of all children. This is the foundation of our quality preschool program.

### The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool View of the Child

Every child is seen as capable, competent and special in their own unique and individual way. Each child is special to those who love them, and we want you to know that they are special to us too.

As respected educators we understand that children have the potential to grow in their own way at their own pace. Each child comes to us with different abilities and life experiences. The VBCP appreciates each child's exceptional characteristics. Your child's growth will not be seen in a singular manner; rather we will look at the growth and development your child is making with a holistic approach. We will recognize and pay attention to your children's physical, personal, social, emotional

and spiritual well-being, as well as the cognitive aspects of learning. We recognize that the connections made in the early years to be one of the most important in early learning. We view a child's ability to learn and connect to be integrated and interconnected. The connections made in these key years between children, families and communities and the importance of relationships is paramount to our programs success. We view our children and their learning as a social activity and we place a high value on collaborative learning and community participation. This partnership is the foundation of what guide the VBCP and our preschool program.

### Program Goals

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool promotes the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of all children in its care. Keeping our children healthy and safe is a priority in the VBCP. In the unfortunate event of an accident, the parents of the child involved will be notified immediately and first aid will be administered as required or the child will be transported to a local hospital for care. All centre staff must have a valid first aid certification including infant and child CPR. All centre staff and volunteers are required to obtain a criminal reference check that includes a vulnerable sector screening. The vulnerable sector check must be updated every year for volunteers and all staff must file a declaration each year. Some of the procedures put in place at the VBCP include:

- Safe supervision of children at all times
- Adhering at all times to the Ministry approved ratios for the preschool setting
- Sanitization and disinfection policies approved by Durham Public Health Officer
- Menu planning following the Canada Food Guide
- Communicable disease prevention
- Emergency procedures and training

### Nutrition

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool provides nutritious snacks and beverages to the children in our care. All food and drink provided by the centre meet or exceed the recommendations set out in the latest version of Health Canada documents, 'Canada's Food Guide', 'Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Metis' or 'Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants', as the case may be.

### Supporting Relationships

At The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool we foster relationships with educators and adults in our program. VBCP educators and volunteers build a foundation of trust with children by being available, sensitive, responsive, and caring. We strive to create an inclusive and respectful environment to foster positive, equitable and collaborative relationships. It is proven that when children feel safe, secure, valued and as a contributing member of their world they are more confident to explore, try new things, inquire, discover, learn and grow.

### Inclusion

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool is a centre of inclusion. We believe that every child deserves to be treated with dignity, respect and equality. It is the duty of the centre to ensure that any child with special abilities is given the opportunity to excel and flourish physically, socially, mentally, and emotionally by providing guidance and skills to both use and master self-regulation skills. The VBCP is flexible and responsive to all the needs of our children and families however possible.

### Encouraging Children to Interact, Communicate & Self-Regulate

What is self-regulation? Self-regulation refers to several complicated processes that allow children to appropriately respond to their environment (Bronson 2000). Self-regulation does not happen overnight. It is a skill that is acquired and develops gradually over time when supported in a positive way by adults and the child's direct environment. Children largely learn to regulate thoughts, feelings, behaviour and emotions by watching and responding to adults' self-regulation. At The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool we promise as mentors and educators to always support these developing skills in our ongoing interactions with the children. Some approaches implemented by the VBCP encourage positive interactions include:

- Modelling – Teachers will model appropriate responses by participating in conversations with children and facilitating peer-to-peer support when conflict arises
- Set realistic expectations – by having appropriate and realistic expectations for our young children's behaviour, adults help children develop self-regulation over time. Defining age-appropriate limits helps a child know what is expected of them
- Scaffolding – The teacher must acknowledge where the child is performing and provide the necessary level of support to the child to be successful (Florez, 2011). Adults will ask open ended, how and why questions, give hints and prompts to facilitate critical thinking skills and provide opportunities for self-regulation
- Support is gradually withdrawn based on individual needs of the child – each child will develop self-regulation at their own time

### Fostering Engagement and Communication with Parents

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool feels it is important to the success of our program to have positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents and our staff. We encourage engagement and communication with parents about our program and their children at daily drop-off and pick-up times, as well as portfolio submissions, monthly newsletter and calendars, parent/teacher meetings, mid-year progress reports and yearly surveys. Weekly program plans are also posted in the centre. This plan offers more details about events and activities offered on a weekly basis. Parents can use this tool for involvement by bringing in resources, such as books, pictures, costumes or music, which are relevant to the programming in the class at the time. Getting to know family members is critical as an educator and including family members in our program helps a child to feel a greater sense of belonging.

### Involving Community Partners

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool is open to all support services and aids in the community to train our staff, contribute to individual program plans or work in the program as additional support in the classroom. Our staff will work cooperatively in a professional partnership with all services in place for the well-being of the child. Service coordination meetings are required to successfully setup goals and discuss what the best interest of the child and their family is. The VBCP actively seeks out opportunities to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community through networking opportunities, community planning and many conferences with a vast array of community partners and services.

The Village of Brooklin of Cooperative Playschool often involves local community partners to help support our children, their families and our staff and volunteers to ensure that each child's specific care and needs are being met. Examples of outside resources include but are not limited to:

- Grandview Children's Centre
- Resources for Exceptional Children
- Durham Behaviour Management System
- Speech and Language Specialist
- Occupational Therapy

## Supporting Educator's Continuous Professional Learning

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool supports our staff in continuous professional learning opportunities to develop their knowledge and to stay current in the profession through regular workshops, seminars/webinars and conferences. On a day-to-day basis the centre supervisor is responsible for leadership, mentoring, coaching and development of all volunteers and teachers. Staff meetings are conducted regularly with our HR committee to reflect and plan our program.

## Documentation

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool participates in a continuous cycle of observation. We observe and document via art, photographs, descriptive learning stories, social media, individual portfolios and progress reports in all aspects of our program. We reflect on what worked and what did not. Links are made between theories, pedagogy, and our program statement to develop our programming based on our children's needs and interests. We continually assess our program and daily demonstrate reflective practice in our programming. Educators are constantly evaluating the effectiveness of the learning environment to continue to build on children's interests.

## Guiding Pedagogy

The Village of Brooklin Cooperative Playschool encompasses the research and legislation in Ontario's three major early learning documents:

- How Does Learning Happen?
- Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)
- Think, Feel, Act Lessons

## Research about Young Children - How Does Learning Happen?

Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years is a professional learning resource guide about learning through relationships for those working with young children and families. It is intended to support pedagogy and curriculum/program development in early year's programs. Pedagogy is 'the understanding of how learning takes place and the philosophy and practice that support that understanding of learning'.

Curriculum (the content of learning) and pedagogy (how learning happens) in early years settings are shaped by views about children, the role of educators and families, and relationships among them. The pedagogical documents, How Does Learning Happen? Helps educators focus on these interrelationships in the context of early years environments.

## How Does Learning Happen?

(<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/children/howlearninghappens.pdf>) is organized around four foundational conditions that are important for children to grow and flourish: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement, and Expression. These foundations are a vision for the future potential of all children and a view of what they should experience each and every day. These four foundations apply regardless of age, ability, culture, language, geography, or setting. They are aligned with the FDK program offered today in Ontario's elementary schools. They are conditions that children naturally seek for themselves.

<u>Foundations</u>	<u>Goals for Children</u>	<u>Expectations for Programs</u>
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world	Early childhood programs cultivate authentic , caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them
Well-being	Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being	Early childhood programs nurture a child’s healthy development and support their growing sense of self, as well as self-regulation skills
Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind and senses	Early childhood programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration and play to develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking and innovating
Expression of Communication	Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways	Early childhood programs foster communication and expression in all forms including creativity, problem solving, mathematical behaviours and language development

### [Early Learning for Every Child Today \(ELECT\)](#)

The Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) is a framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings. This early learning framework, sets out six principles to guide practice in early years settings. It also provides a continuum of development for children from birth to age eight.

ELECT is recognized as a foundational document in the early years sector. It provides a shared language and common understanding of a child’s learning and development for early years professionals as they work together in various early childhood settings.

The principles of ELECT have informed provincial child care policy, such as the Ontario Early Years Policy framework, as well as pan-Canadian early learning initiatives such as the Statement on Play of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada.

ELECT principles are also embedded in the program document used in Ontario’s innovative Kindergarten program.

### Think, Feel, Act Lessons

Think, Feel, Act are six research briefs for educators working in early years settings which, highlight the latest research in early childhood development, strategies to put the key ideas into practice and reflective questions for educators. There is a common thread throughout the briefs: a view of the child as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. These briefs are intended to challenge the status quo and encourage critical reflection as we consider our work from different perspectives. As 'briefs', the documents are not intended to provide an in-depth analysis of each topic, but instead, to pique your interest and highlight key ideas that are useful and relevant to your work. Above all, these briefs are intended to get people talking about some of the big ideas that have such a significant impact on the experience of the children across the province.

Please visit [www.vbcplayschool.ca](http://www.vbcplayschool.ca) for more information and all up-to-date policies and procedures.