



# Parent Handbook

Issue Date: March 2026

## **Inside our Parent Handbook**

Welcome to Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre

Program Statement

Curriculum

Goals

Who we are

Licensing

General information

Waitlist and registration

Policies and Procedures

Welcome to Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre. We are pleased that you have chosen Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre to be part of your child's early growth and development.

At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre our mission is to provide our families with a sense of ease and comfort knowing that they have made the right choice by enrolling their children in our Program.

For many children, this will be their first time leaving the comfort and familiarity of their home to venture into a new and exciting world of discovery. Children are viewed as capable, competent and curious individuals. Our staff:

- Take pride in providing a rich program that allows them to explore and learn while keeping them safe;
- Work hand in hand with each of you to ensure the transition from home to Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre goes smoothly.
- Will keep you updated on your child's activities and routines, as well as provide observations related to their development.
- Are available as resources at any time.

Children are provided an enriched program through an Emergent Curriculum. Emergent Curriculum is a tool in early childhood education that has the power to create meaningful activities and lessons suited to the individual student. In turn, this creates an early childhood learning environment which encourages children to explore and develop new skills and interests. Through observation and daily interactions with the children, staff develop their program. Children and staff are active participants in daily learning in the child's environment. Staff take this opportunity to approach a child in a holistic way. Understanding all components and the interconnections provides the staff team with an insight on how to provide age and developmentally appropriate activities.

Each year, Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre reviews and revises the guidelines and policies outlined in this Parent handbook to ensure our childcare standards continue to meet and exceed the requirements set up by our licensing bodies. Should our policies change, we will provide you with reasonable notice of modifications that will impact you and your child. Management endeavors to achieve the highest quality care for your child.

Please feel free to contact Management on any matter regarding your child or the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre.

We look forward to sharing your child's early years with you and your family.

Regards,  
*Joy Bowman, RECE*  
Manager  
Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre

## **Program Statement, Curriculum, & Goals**

### **PROGRAM STATEMENT**

Our program statement describes how our program fosters early learning while supporting each child's unique journey through their formative years. It will also outline how we evaluate our program to maintain a quality and inclusive environment to meet the needs of our families and children.

Our Program Statement is provided through the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre's logo of a hand. The hand represents the collaboration involved in raising a child.

First, the hand represents the child. A child's hand is unique. It identifies their curious nature and uniqueness. We view the child as capable and competent through their growth and development. This is approached in a holistic manner.

Secondly, the hand represents a child's family. Every child is special in the eyes of their family and family desire the best for their young one.

Third, the hand represents the professionals that work with our children. They are caring, knowledgeable and resourceful.

Lastly, the hand represents our community. At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre, we pride ourselves as being an essential service being provided to our community. At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre, we are dedicated to supporting every child's growth and development through a safe and welcoming environment for our families and children.

### **VANA STRA EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING CENTRE CURRICULUM**

The skills and knowledge that your child develops during their time with us at Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is embodied in the philosophies and curriculum upheld by our staff.

Using "*How Does Learning Happen, HDLH (Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years)*" as the guiding document under the Child Care and Early Years Act, and applying this we can foster play and inquiry through age appropriate activities. Our approach to the curriculum is emergent and play-based and focused on a child's natural inquiries.

"Early Learning for Every Child Today", provides a guideline for developmental and physical milestones. This equips our staff with the knowledge to ensure activities and programming is delivered with intention and purpose based on age and developmental appropriateness.

The “Think, Feel, Act” document focuses on inclusion, diversity, safety and wellbeing along with making connections with one another and their environment.

## **GOALS**

### **Goal 1: Promoting well-being, nutrition, health and safety**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre provides an essential service to families and the community. It is the aim to ensure that children are in a safe, nurturing environment that will foster well-being and independence. Children are provided with the tools to embody a healthy lifestyle in their early years.

Promoting well-being, nutrition and health & safety through:

- Menu Planning following the Canada Food Guide – posted and provided to all families
- Provide opportunity for indoor and outdoor active play (i.e. Swim Sessions for Preschool aged children)
- Provide safe supervision of children
- Implement Child Protection procedures and training
- Adhering to sanitation and disinfection procedures
- Communicate by posting any communicable diseases and prevention strategies
- Following posted emergency procedures
- All educators have Standard First Aid and CPR Level C training and a Vulnerable Sector Check

### **Goal 2: A holistic approach**

Young children flourish in all areas of development when they are in positive and responsive relationships with adults. Staff build a foundation of trust with children by being available, sensitive, responsive, and caring. We know that each child is an individual of great human worth and potential. Staff create an inclusive and respectful environment that fosters positive, equitable, and collaborative relationships. When children feel safe, secure, valued and a contributing member of their world they are able to explore, discover, try new things, grow, learn and develop. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to communicate with staff on a regular basis. In doing so, there is open communication of observations, reflections and documentation about their child’s day.

### **Goal 3: Encouraging children to interact, communicate and self-regulate**

Our aim for children, consistent with the Ministry of Education method and practice of teaching include:

- Staff provide small group experiences that allow for more individualized adult attention

- Staff role model inclusive, respectful, and collaborative interactions with children and other adults
- Staff ensure the learning environment is flexible so they can respond in the moment and build on or scaffold the children's interests
- Staff ensure toys, equipment, and materials are plentiful and available to children at all times. Children are given freedom to make choices
- By engaging as a play partner with children, staff are able to demonstrate prosocial skills including promoting discussion, problem solving when conflict arises, and understanding how their actions affect others
- Staff attend trainings that address self-regulation and resilience

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre believes that it is the role of the adult in a child's life to support them to learn how to interact effectively with the world around them including other children, adults, and the environment. Staff will foster and encourage building positive self-regulation skills. Self-regulation is defined as the ability to manage your own energy states, emotions, behaviours, and attention in ways that are socially acceptable and help achieve positive goals such as maintaining good relationships, learning, and maintaining well-being.

#### **Goal 4: Fostering play, exploration and inquiry**

"Staff are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective, and resourceful professionals. They bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. They collaborate with others to create engaging environments and experiences to foster children's learning and development."

Source: How does learning happen: Ontario's pedagogy for the Early Years

Children are born with a natural sense of curiosity and wonder and play comes naturally to them. As parents and educators, we watch children explore their world through their senses, repetition of tasks, imitation, asking questions and pretending. Children are putting together all the pieces of how the world works through exploration, play and inquiry. Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre staff understand the importance of play. They foster, expand and scaffold this natural talent called play by being:

- Active participants
- Architects of the play scape
- Keen observers
- Planners
- Reporters

- Collaborators
- Reflective practitioners

Children decide where, when, what and how they wish to play. Their decisions are based on their interests and curiosity. Staff respond by adapting the environment by adding new toys, materials and equipment, posing questions, and being a play partner. This sets the stage for further play, inquiry, discovery and learning. Staff's role is to support play so that learning and development flourishes.

### **Goal 5: Planning Learning environments for inclusion**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre recognizes that each child has the right and deserves to have the opportunity to grow and develop in a safe, secure, and nurturing environment where they are accepted. Every child is a unique and worthy individual. At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre we are an inclusive environment and aim to meet the needs of each individual child.

In the classroom learning centers are designed to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the children. We have created home like environments that include calm colors, soft furnishings, items from nature like plants and pets, family photographs, and accessories that are intended to make children feel comfortable and safe. Staff understand that children learn holistically not in one area of development at a time. We offer open-ended materials that encourage thinking and exploration to meet the needs of every child.

Staff design a daily schedule that meets the needs of the children and provides for a balance of activities throughout the day. Consideration for the care requirements, age, developmental level, energy level, and interests of the children are included. Generous blocks of time for children to explore, play, and inquire are included both indoors and outdoors. The daily schedule is not rigid but operating in small groups is mandated. One small group of children may be on the playground, while the other small group may prefer to stay indoors and explore the materials. Periods of active and quiet play are interwoven throughout the day both indoors and outdoors. At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre we don't let the weather stop us from having fun in nature. The children love to bundle up in warm dry clothes and head out to jump in puddles or make snowballs. In very poor weather active play takes place indoors so that children get the physical activity their bodies require. Staff are trained to keep transitions between activities to a minimum so children get to play more. Young children thrive on regular schedules and feel secure when they can predict what will occur

throughout the day therefore snacks and meal times are consistent as is the rest period in the afternoon for young children.

### **Goal 6: Indoor, outdoor, active, rest and quiet activities**

Staff provide indoor and outdoor environments and experiences that invite children to investigate, imagine, think, and create. Open ended materials, sensory, loose parts and activities that permit reasonable risk taking allow children to engage in meaningful play through active exploration and inquiry. Staff will allow the children the freedom to seek out areas of play, rest or engage in quiet activities. Staff will provide a creative experience throughout various parts of the day and support nap time while being mindful of parent request and children's needs.

### **Goal 7: Fostering engagement and communication with parents/guardians**

A parent is the most important person in a child's life. Our staff play a supporting role while parents go to work and/or school. Staff and parents communicate on a daily basis about children's activities and health. Staff keep a record of each toddler, and preschool aged child's learning and development through Storypark, our online parent platform, and is available for parents to read each day. Getting to know family members is critical. Including family members in the program helps a child to feel a greater sense of belonging. Other strategies to engage parents and gain input include:

- Documentations that describe play and its connection to learning
- Parent/Staff interviews
- Celebrations & events
- Parent surveys
- Displays of children's artwork, sculptures, and creations
- Photographs of children at play
- Posting planning documents that include observations of children's interests and activities introduced by staff

### **Goal 8: Community Partnerships**

We will work alongside our community partners and agencies to better support our children and families. If staff or parent has a question or concern with regards to child development, they will consult with our Growing Together Early Learning Resource Consultant Program. Other referrals may be required based on the needs of the child and family. This program is open to children under the age of 12 with special needs, including those with barriers in the area of communication, social, physical, emotional, intellectual, and behavioral development. Please

speak to Management on how to access programs through our community partnerships.

### **Goal 9: Supporting staff's' continuous professional development**

At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre we are committed to the ongoing professional development of all staff. What staff learn is applied to practice and the benefit is passed onto the children. Staff are provided with opportunities to attend external learning events and conferences and uphold legislated training requirements.

On a day-to-day basis the Manager is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of staff. Based on the learning needs of the staff, the Management team may meet with staff to suggest strategies, conduct learning huddles to focus on a particular area of curriculum with the entire team, conduct regular staff meetings to reflect and plan, invite speakers and community agencies to attend the centre, or provide materials including links, articles, and various readings to supplement educator's professional learning.

### **Goal 10: Documentation**

- Staff participate in a continuous cycle of observation
- Documenting play and its significance
- Determining the children's interests
- Planning activities that support the interests
- Discussion with team members
- Reflection that informs the planning of activities and the learning environment.

Links are made between theory, research, curriculum, the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre Program Statement, government method and practice of teaching, and children's interests to inform the planning decisions staff make. You will see this cycle reflected in the toys, materials, and equipment provided in the play areas, the furniture arrangement, the creative work of children, the activities children are engaging in, and the planning documents posted weekly for parents to read and discuss with the staff. This is provided through photographs and written descriptions of activities. This process of continuous program assessment is called reflective practice. Staff on a daily basis are observing and engaging with children and evaluating the effectiveness of the learning environment to build on children's interests. Weekly they are reviewing planning and discussing with team members and Management to

ensure they are supporting children's learning and development and monthly they are meeting as a team to look back on what did and didn't work and then plan for the future.

Families are encouraged to engage in ongoing communication with their child's educators regarding the program and their development. An invitation for parents to add their own documentation about their children's learning and home life through Brightwheel is encouraged.

## **Who We Are**

### **Our Staff**

Our staff come with a wide background of education and experience. Staff must go through a screening process that includes demonstrating their values and skills, providing a police reference check that is renewed every 5 years, and holding a valid Standard First Aid and Infant and Child CPR certification. Our staff are trained to:

- Communicate regularly to families about their child's progress
- Plan classroom activities based on their knowledge of early childhood development
- Observe and document the progress of each individual child
- Practice the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre high standards of child safety and protection

Educators participate in two (2) Professional Development trainings, hosted by Huron County, to gain a deeper understanding of child development, play, play partnership, program planning, extension of play and scaffolding of learning, effective communication, and providing positive learning environments.

### **College of Early Childhood Educators**

The College of Early Childhood Educators is the professional self-regulatory body for registered early childhood educators (RECE) in Ontario. The College's role is to protect the public interest by setting requirements for registration to practice as a RECE, setting ethical and professional standards and holding RECEs accountable for their practice. RECEs are trained in child development and the planning and delivery of play-based learning in child care programs. Staff with an early childhood education diploma or equivalent qualifications degree must be current members of the College in good standing. RECEs must renew their membership with the College on an annual basis.

### **Our Volunteers and Students on Educational Placements**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is enhanced by the involvement of volunteers and placement students. Volunteers and placement students are always under the direct supervision of a staff member and never left alone with children. All volunteers and placement students must provide a police reference check before interacting with children and are required to adhere to all policies and procedures and Ministry of Education regulations.

### **Licensing**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is licensed by the Ministry of Education and adhere to standards established in the Child Care Early Years Act to ensure that all programs provide a safe, healthy and stimulating environment with quality care for the children we serve.

### Staff/Child Ratios & Programs

<b>Age of Children in Group</b>	<b>Ratios of Children to Educators</b>	<b>Licensed Capacity</b>
<b>Toddlers</b> 18 months up to but under 30 months	1 to 5	10
<b>Preschool</b> 30 months but under 6 years	1 to 8	32
<b>Primary/Junior School Age</b> 68 months up to but under 13 years	1 to 13	20

### Ratios during Times of Drop Off & Pick Up and Rest Period

Except where the children enrolled are under 18 months of age, during the periods of drop of and pick up of children and during the rest period, the ratio of educators to children may be reduced to less than that set out in the chart, as the case may be, if the observed ratio is not less than 2/3 of the required ratio.

## **General Information**

### **Hours of Operation**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre toddler and preschool programs run from January to December, Monday to Friday. Our hours of operation are from 7:00AM to 6:00PM.

Our school age program operates from September to the end of June in conjunction with the school calendar. We service two schools; Huron Centennial Public School and St. Joseph's Catholic Elementary School. Buses will pick up and drop off children outside the centre.

The Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will be closed during the winter holidays following the school boards' calendar. Families will be notified of the closure dates in advance.

Parents are reminded that the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre does not officially open until 7:00AM. Staff may be in the building before this time, however, the staff opening the Centre does have duties to perform before the regular day begins at 7:00AM. The morning staff is not permitted to supervise children before this time. Please do not ask staff to make an exception for your child.

Parents must arrange to have their child picked up from the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre by 6:00PM. If your child is not picked up by 6:00PM and we are unable to reach any listed contacts, Family and Children's Services will be contacted to handle the situation.

### **Office Hours**

Our office hours are from 7:00AM to 4:00PM. If you wish to speak to Management, we can make arrangements by appointment to be available after these hours.

### **Inclement Weather Closures**

#### **1. Closure prior to opening**

If inclement or severe weather occurs prior to the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre being opened, the Manager will inform the CAO of the Municipality of Huron East of the decision to close. Management will then inform their Program Advisor from the Ministry of Education of the closure. This is not a Serious Occurrence and does not need to be reported on CCLS.

A designated staff member will be contacted and will be responsible for communicating to all staff members and posting the closure on the child care's Brightwheel platform. Management will also inform media outlets of the closure (CKNX/Blackburn news). This information will be provided before the centre is scheduled to open at 7:00AM.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to check for updated communication. (Brightwheel/CKNX Blackburn news)

No fees will be charged if the Day Care is closed prior to opening due to inclement weather closures.

## **2. Closure during operating hours**

If the centre is open and weather conditions quickly deteriorate and staff are delayed, parents will be asked to wait at the centre until we can ensure that proper ratios are in effect.

Management and CAO will continue to monitor and assess the conditions and take into account the safety of staff and families in returning home. In the event that Management and the Municipality of Huron East determines that the centre must close during normal hours of operation, parents will be called and required to pick up their children as soon as possible.

Please be aware that if the centre is closed or should close prior to regular closing hours, there will be no reimbursement or credit of childcare fees.

Criteria used to determine closure:

- Weather conditions and forecasts, weather alerts
- Road conditions and closures
- Loss of running water and/or water for an extended duration
- Staff and families are unable to make the drive safely
- Any other extenuating circumstances

## **3. Inclement weather and transportation with no buses and School-age**

If school buses are cancelled due to inclement weather or hazardous road conditions, the school-age program will be cancelled for the day. A credit for the day will be applied to parent's next month's billing.

## **Public Holidays and Closures**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will be closed on the following days following Statutory Holidays:

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

- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will not be closed for more than 2 consecutive weeks per year.

### **Professional Development Days**

At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre we are committed to ensuring that staff and management are current and up-to-date with Professional Development. In order to support this mission, two of the days for the calendar year staff at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will be required to participate in Professional Development courses.

Families will be provided with adequate notice in order to arrange alternate child care.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up**

We encourage all parents to have their child at the centre by 9:00AM. This is so the different groups can have a smooth transition into their daily programming/routine.

It is strongly discouraged that your child arrive after 11:00 A.M. (unless for special circumstances), as staffing may have changed due to attendance/ratios. This also allows children to transition easily into their day at daycare.

All parents/guardians must notify the centre if your child is going to be late or absent due to illness. Please do not drop your child off at the door. It is for your child's safety that we insist that you ensure staff acknowledge your child's presence before you leave.

If someone other than yourself or one of your appointed people is to pick up your child, you must notify the centre by a signed note or email. If you do not notify us and we are unable to reach you or one of your appointed people, the child will not be permitted to leave the centre. The staff has the right and obligation to ask for identification of a person unknown to them.

### **Meals and Snacks**

At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre children are provided with variety of healthy and nutritious meals. Our meals and snacks are prepared on site. Children will receive a morning and afternoon snack and a lunch. Our menu is on a four-week rotation. We have a Fall/Winter Menu and Spring/Summer Menu. This is provided to parents via email, parent board and posted on Brightwheel.

Menus are created following the guidelines outlined by the Ministry of Education and is in accordance to the Canada's Food Guide.

### **Weather Appropriate Clothing/Children's Belongings**

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure your child is equipped with weather appropriate clothing for each of the seasons. Please see staff for a list of weather appropriate clothing should you require one.

All of your child's items should be clearly labeled with their name and placed in a backpack or tote with their name on it. Your child will be assigned a cubby space where their backpack can stay, however due to limited cubby spaces, they are often shared with another child.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to refrain from bringing personal items such as toys, books and personal electronic devices from home as they can be damaged, lost or stolen.

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is not responsible for any items that go missing.

### **Items to Bring**

Please note that all items being brought into the centre must be labeled. Children often come in with similar or the same items. To prevent loss and misplacement, it is encouraged that all your child's belongings are all labeled with a suitable label. In doing so, all items can be returned to its rightful home without confusion.

- Diapers/Pull Ups -If being used
- Diaper Cream
- Wipes
- Change of clothes – 3-4 outfits are advisable
- Indoor and outdoor shoes (croc's or flip flops are **not** permitted)
- Socks
- Underwear – if needed
- Seasonal outdoor clothing
- Water Bottle
- Blanket and/or Stuffy for nap time
- Backpack to put all items in
- Family Photo
- Swim clothes
- Towel
- Swimmer Diapers – If needed
- Sunscreen

### **Excursions and Field Trips**

Staff at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre occasionally take the children for short walks to areas of interest within Vanastra. A consent form in our Enrollment Package gives permission for community walks.

Parents will be provided with a permission form for field trips ahead of time outlining the date, time and cost of a field trip.

### **Parent Issues and Concerns**

We value the individual needs of our children and families at our centre. We respect this partnership and foster on-going communication with parents, school personnel and community partners to meet these needs. Open communication daily with parents, children and staff is essential for a quality childcare experience. Our staff 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 will be addressed in a timely manner and every effort will be made to resolve these concerns. If Management is contacted, they will follow-up and make contact within 2 business days. In concerns regarding an allegation of abuse, the response to the concern will happen within 24 hours of the concern being reported.

- If there is a concern regarding program activities/room (i.e., programming, schedules, toileting, or nutritional concerns), please address the concern directly with the program staff. If the issue cannot be resolved, contact Management.
- If there is a concern with day-to-day operations (i.e., wait list, fees, menus), contact Management
- Any concerns surrounding students on placement (Co-Operative Education/College placements), address the concern with Management. If needed, they will discuss with the Field Placement Supervisors.
- All issues or concerns regarding individual staff conduct that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to Management immediately.
- Concerns regarding Management should be directed to the Director of Community Service at [csd@huroneast.com](mailto:csd@huroneast.com)

Every discussion will be treated as confidential, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (i.e.: CAS, Ministry of Education, and College of Early Childhood Educators). The duty to report is an ongoing obligation. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may need 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.

Should a parent express an issue or concern directly with a staff member, the staff member will:

- Listen attentively to gain a full understanding of the issue or concern.
- Problem solve together.
- Document the situation, which will include the issue/concern and the steps taken to resolve it.
- Follow up with the parents to ensure that the plan/ supports are being met and manageable.
- Contact management immediately and inform them of the concern.

## **Wait List and Registration**

### **Wait List Registry and Policy**

Huron County has a centralized on-line Child Care Registry & Waitlist (One HSN-Huron) <https://onehsn.com/huron>. There will be no cost associated with placing a child on this wait list or having them removed.

Once parents have completed the on-line wait list, families are contacted in order of application registration date to discuss requested care requirements and eligibility of space and/or availability for child care.

If there are no spaces available at the time, families will have the opportunity to fill out a centre enrolment package and be placed in order of the wait list priority.

When registering please note that for the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre, priority is given in the following order to our families:

1. Employees of a Huron East Business
2. Huron East Residents
3. Siblings of children currently enrolled

When the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre has pending openings they will consult the registry wait list and contact the family. Parents will have five business days to accept or decline. Lack of response will be assumed as a decline of enrollment with the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre. If declined the child's name will be removed from our waitlist.

Families that are placed on our waitlist are encouraged to keep in touch with the centre either by phone or email, especially if your child care needs change while waiting for a space. Upon request, the waiting list will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it, but that allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected persons or families.

Once admission has been established, the parent/guardian will be required to fill out an enrolment package or update an existing enrolment package.

Management will then coordinate with the family for a centre tour.

Privacy and Confidentiality

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

## **Registration**

Registration forms are available at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre office or on the Municipality of Huron East website

(<https://www.huroneast.com/en/my-huron-east/childcare.aspx>)

Before enrolling any new children, parents or guardians are required to schedule an appointment with Management for a tour. We believe this provides both the parents and Management with the opportunity to clearly convey their expectations and go through our registration package one-on-one. Upon accepting enrollment, you will be provided with an enrollment package. When returning the enrollment package, all areas of the form must be completed and a copy of your child’s updated immunization or (a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief Form) along with any applicable custody information must be provided to process the enrollment. Any missing information or documents can delay your start date.

<b>CARE CODE</b>	<b>Base Rate February 1, 2024</b>
<b>TODDLER FULL DAY</b>	\$20.43
<b>PRESCHOOL FULL DAY</b>	\$18.96
<b>Kindergarten FULL DAY</b>	\$18.96
<b>Kindergarten BEFORE OR AFTER</b>	\$12.00
<b>Kindergarten BEFORE &amp; AFTER</b>	\$12.00
<b>SCHOOL AGE FULL DAY 6-12 years</b>	\$34.00
<b>SCHOOL AGE BEFORE &amp; AFTER 6-12 years</b>	\$21.84
<b>SCHOOL AGE BEFORE 6-12 years</b>	\$16.12
<b>SCHOOL AGE AFTER 6-12 years</b>	\$17.37

### Payment of Fees

Payments can be sent via e-transfer to: Brightwheel

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC). Base fees are fees that every parent/guardian is required to pay in order for their child(ren) to attend. Non-base

fees are fees that not every parent is required to pay unless indicated by the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre and the Municipality of Huron East. Non-base fees include; late fees, NSF charges and field trips. More details on non-base fees are located further down in this document.

September 1, 2022 to December 1, 2022 base fees were reduced by 25%. A further reduction of 37% occurred on January 1, 2023. Future reductions will be communicated to families as they occur.

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC) is applicable to children under the age of 6 years old. CWELCC does not apply to children 6 and older.

Invoices will be sent out to families via email and will be issued on the first business day of each month and due within 7 days of the invoice date.

Enrollment in the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is conditional on full and timely payment of fees. It is the responsibility of the payee to ensure the account balance is current. A Late Fee Service Charge will be added to your account for all past due invoices. We reserve the right to require a change in your method of payment and/or terminate your child care space if your account is not kept current. Note that if you leave the centre with an outstanding balance owing, we will use any and all measures available to us to collect the balance.

Families requiring child care subsidy – fee assistance - can reach out to Huron County for more information and qualification outlines.

### **Absence from Care**

You are required to pay fees for any day which your child is scheduled to be at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre, whether they are in attendance or not.

### **Non Base Fees**

Non-base fees are exempted from the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) System. Non-base fees are:

- NSF charges - \$35.00
- Late Pick Up Fees - \$15.00/1-15 minute increments
- Field Trips/Excursions – To be determined
- Swim - \$2.00, \$4.00 School-Age
- Late Payment Fee – 1.25% accrued per month

**Late Pick Up Fees**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre provides child care from the hours of 7:00AM to 6:00PM. Families are encouraged to pick up their child(ren) by 6:00PM. In the event that you will be later than 6:00PM, you are required to call the centre and inform us.

A late fee charge of \$15.00 per 1-15 minute increments after 6:00PM will be applied to your monthly invoice.

**Withdrawal Policy**

If you decide to withdraw from the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre, a written notice of 30 days is required. If withdrawal notifications are submitted with less than the stipulated time frame, daycare fees for the remaining scheduled period will still be charged.

**Refund/Credit Policy**

A refund will be issued if an overpayment occurs, or in the case of a withdrawal, any remaining balances, after the 30 day notice, will be refunded.

Credits will be issued in cases of incorrect billing.

Base Fees	Non-Base fees
Play Material, equipment and furnishings: Cots, bedding, play materials	Late pick up fees for child care provided beyond operational hours outlined in the parent handbook. \$15.00/1-15 minute increments
Supervision by adult during operational hours	Bank processing fees(such as for non-sufficient funds \$35.00
Development and implementation of individualized plans(medical, special needs, anaphylaxis)	Field trips(if optional)  Swim- \$2.00 a swim/\$3.50 PA day
Registration fee, deposits, administration fees-any fee mandatory for a parent to pay in order to receive childcare.	Late payment fee-\$1.25 % accrued per month

Food(where required by regulation for children under 44 months AND where mandatory for parents)	

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Safe Arrival and Dismissal**

- Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.
- Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The centre will not release any children from care without supervision.
- Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, employee must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

### **Procedures**

#### **Accepting a child into care**

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program employee in the room must:
  - Greet the parent/guardian and child.
  - Ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the child's Emergency Card or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing to management at [daycare@huroneast.com](mailto:daycare@huroneast.com) (e.g., email).
  - Document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily written record.
  - Sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

#### **Where a child has not arrived in care as expected**

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
  - Inform management and they must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:00 AM. Management shall contact the parent/guardian by following the outlined order:

- Call
- Text – using centre cell phone
- Message via parent communication app
- Email

Management will follow the outlined order above until contact is made with an adult to confirm absence etc.

### **Additional Steps**

- In the event that management is unable to reach a child's parent/guardian through the above methods, management will proceed to contact emergency contacts listed on the child's Emergency Card.
  - In the event there is a suspicion compromising the health, safety and wellbeing of the child, authorities will be contacted (e.g. police, CAS etc.)
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff 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**

1. The employee who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
- Confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
  - Where the above is not possible, 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.

### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)**

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the employee a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up within 1 hour of expected time, management shall contact the parent/guardian and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up. Means of communication will be:
- Call

- Text – using centre cell phone
- Message via parent communication app
- Email
- Where management is unable to reach the parent/guardian, management must call again and leave a voicemail.
- Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall:
  - Contact the child's emergency contact listed on the Emergency Card
  - Wait until the program closes and then refer to the procedures under "Where a child has not been picked up and the program is closed".

#### **Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed**

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 6:00 PM, the employee shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. The employee must stay with the child, while they proceed with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time.
3. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the employee shall first contact the parent/guardian to inform them that the authorized individual has not picked up. Secondly, the employee will contact the authorized individual responsible for pick up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
4. If the employee is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the employee will begin contacting authorized individuals listed on the child's Emergency Card.
5. Where the employee is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 7:00 PM the employee shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 519-524-7356. Staff shall follow the CAS's

direction with respect to next steps. The employee must then inform management and document the incident and steps taken.

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will not dismiss children without adult supervision.

### **Health and Illness**

At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre our priority is to ensure that children, families and staff are provided with a safe environment. To maintain a good standard of health, we conduct a daily health check upon arrival.

Children arriving at the Centre with undiagnosed eye infections, rashes, head lice, severe coughing, fever 37.8/100.04 degrees or flu-like symptoms, including diarrhea will not be permitted to stay at the Centre. If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be contacted to pick up your child, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within one hour of notification. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure they have alternate arrangements.

- Children that are out program due to gastro symptoms are permitted to return 48 hours after symptoms of diarrhea and/or vomiting have diminished.
- Children that are out of program due to a fever must remain home for 24 hours and is permitted to return when the fever is no longer present without the use of medication.
- Children that present with symptoms of pink-eye are required to be on eye drops for 24 hours prior to returning to the centre
- If a child has head lice, parents will be contacted to pick up their child. The child is permitted to return after using a product that kills live lice.
- More information can be found on the Huron Perth Public Health website.

If your child is sick and will not be attending or you are unsure call the centre. Inform staff of your child's illness and provide symptoms so it can be traced through public health for outbreaks.

### **Anaphylactic Policy**

Development of individualized plans and emergency procedures for each child with an anaphylactic allergy who receives child care must include:

- The individualized plan shall be developed in consultation with a parent of the child and with any regulated health professional who is involved in the

child's health care and who, in the parent's opinion, should be included in the consultation. O. Reg. 126/16, s. 27.

- Parents are encouraged to advise management either upon the time of enrolment or immediately after their child develops a new allergy that requires medication. And, if there are any changes to the child's individual plan (example, new symptoms of a reaction or has outgrown an allergy and no longer requires medication.)

**Individual plan should include:**

- A description of the child's allergy
- Steps to the reduce the risk of exposure to the causative agent/allergy
- Signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction
- Action to be taken by the employees, students, volunteers and visitors in the event the child has an anaphylactic reaction.
- Parents consent for the employees to administer allergy medication
- Emergency contact information (parent, alternate emergency contact, emergency services)
- Every epinephrine auto injector must be carried wherever the child goes

**Strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic allergens**

- Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre is a peanut/nut free facility.
- Food and drinks are not served when ingredients are unknown.
- Food and drinks are not served with the 'may contain' warnings on the label.
- The ingredients will be reviewed before food is served to children to verify that causative agents are not served to children with anaphylactic allergies.
- If the meals and snacks provided by the centre cannot meet the needs of the child, parents are required to supply labelled snacks and meals for their child. All written instructions provided by the parent will be implemented.
- Parents are required to label food brought into the centre with the child's full name, date the food arrived and all ingredients.
- Staff will supervise children so that food is not shared or exchanged.
- Parents who serve foods containing allergens at home are required to rid of all known allergens prior to attending (e.g., by thoroughly washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Craft and/or sensory materials and toys that have known allergens on the labels will not be used.

- All families are informed about known anaphylaxis and strategies to reduce the risk of exposure and any changes that occur.
- Each child's individual plan and emergency procedure is kept-up-to-date and that all staff, students, and volunteers are trained on the plans.
- The allergy list is up to date and implemented.
- When changes to a child's allergies, signs and symptoms, and treatment occur, staff, students and volunteers are informed of the updated individualized plans and emergency procedures.

### **Communication Plan**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will provide general information on life threatening allergies including anaphylactic allergies, to staff volunteers and students.

The communication plan should identify:

- Parents will be informed about known anaphylactic allergies and all known allergens at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre through postings on the Parent Board.
- Employees, students and volunteers will be made aware of known anaphylactic allergies and causative agents to be avoided immediately through verbal communication as well as signing off on individual plans
- Each child's individualized plan and emergency procedures will be made available and accessible wherever the child may be present while receiving child care.
- The cook and/or food handling staff will be informed of all the allergies at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre.
- An updated list of allergies will be provided to cook and classrooms as soon as new allergies are identified.
- Meal substitutions will be labelled with the child's name
- Management will communicate which foods are not to be used in preparation and will work together on meal substitutions to be provided
- The communication plan will be continually reviewed to ensure it is meeting the needs of the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre

The Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will avoid, to the best of our ability, exposure to the known allergens of your child. Allergy lists will be posted in the kitchen, office and classrooms. The employees will monitor foods provided to the children to ensure that no known allergens are served to children with anaphylactic allergies.

## Training

When management has been trained by a parent, it is the responsibility of management to ensure training is provided to all staff, students and volunteers at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre. The training on a child's anaphylaxis will include:

- Recognizing the signs and symptoms specific to the child's anaphylaxis
- Actions to be taken by the employees
- And, how to administer allergy medication
- Training will be repeated annually, and at any time there are changes to any child's individualized plan and emergency procedures.
- A record of training will be kept on each staff, student and volunteer in their personal Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions file.
- Emergency medication is kept in an accessible area to employees, students and volunteers, but must remain inaccessible to children

Circumstances	Roles and Responsibilities
Child exhibits an anaphylactic reaction to an allergen	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The person who becomes aware of the child's anaphylactic reaction must immediately:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Implement the child's individualized plan and emergency procedures</li> <li>ii. Contact emergency services and parent/guardian of the child, or have another person do so where possible</li> <li>iii. Ensure that when an epinephrine auto injector has been used, it is properly discarded (ex. given to emergency services.)</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Once the child's condition has stabilized or the child has been taken to the hospital, staff must:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the child care centre's Serious Occurrence Policy and Procedure</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document the incident in the classroom communication log book</li> </ul>
--	---

Signs and symptoms can vary for different children and can be different from reaction to the next, including:

- Skin: hives, swelling, itching, warmth, redness, rash, watery eyes
- Breathing (respiratory): coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pains/tightness, through tightness-swelling, hoarse voice, nasal congestion, runny nose, trouble swallowing
- Stomach (Gastro Intestinal): nausea, pain/cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- Heart (Cardiovascular): Pail-blue in colour, weak pulse, fainting, dizzy and light headed, shock

### **Parental Authorization to Administer Medication**

Whenever possible, parents will be encouraged to administer drugs or medications to at home if this can be done without affecting the child's treatment schedule.

- Prescription and over-the-counter medications for acute, symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent of the child has given written authorization to do so by completing the child care centre's (Ongoing) Medication Consent Form. The Medication form must be accompanied by a doctor's note for over-the-counter medications.
- The authorization must include a schedule that sets out the times the drug or medication is to be given and the amounts to be administered.
- Where a drug or medication is to be administered to a child on an "as needed" basis (i.e. there is no specific schedule or time of the day for administration), the (Ongoing) Medication Consent Form must clearly indicate the situations, signs and symptoms under which the medication is to be given as outlined by the parent.
- Prescription/over-the-counter skin products (with a DIN) that need to be administered for acute or symptomatic treatment will only be administered to a child where a parent has given written authorization to do so by completing the child care centre's Medication Form.
- As long as sunscreen, lotion, lip balm, bug spray, hand sanitizer and diaper cream are non- prescription and/or are not for acute (symptomatic) treatment, and due to their longer-term daily usage, these products:
  - must have a blanket authorization from a parent on the enrolment form;
  - can be administered without a Medication Form; and
  - does not require record-keeping

### **Drug and Medication Requirements**

All drugs and medications to be administered to children must meet the following requirements:

All drugs and medications must be stored in their original containers as supplied by a pharmacist, or their original packages. Medications that have been removed from their original package or transferred into a different container will not be accepted or administered to children.

All drug or medication containers must be clearly labelled with:

1. The child's full name;
  2. The name of the drug or medication;
  3. The dosage of the drug or medication;
  4. Instructions for storage;
  5. Instructions for administration;
  6. The date of purchase of the medication for prescription medications; and
  7. The expiry date of the medication, if applicable.
- The information provided on the written Medication Form must match with all the requirements listed above.
  - Where information is missing on a drug or medication label and/or the written Medication Form does not match the label on the labelled container, the child care centre will not accept or administer the medication until the label and/or written parental authorization accurately contains all the required information.
  - Drugs or medications purchased by staff, students or volunteers for their own use will be kept inaccessible to children and will not be administered to children at any time.

### **Drug and Medication Handling and Storage**

- All drugs or medications will be kept inaccessible to children at all times in a locked container or area (e.g. in a refrigerator, cabinet, cupboard or drawer).
- Emergency medications will not be locked up and will be made accessible to all employees while being kept out of the reach of children, including during outdoor play periods and off-premises activities.
- Emergency medications will be brought on all field trips, evacuations and off-site activities.
- All drugs and medications for children will be stored in accordance with the instructions for storage on the label. Medication requiring refrigeration will be stored in the refrigerator in a locked container.
- Where drugs or medications are past their expiry date, they will be returned to the parent of the child, where possible, and this will be documented on the Medication Consent Form.

### **Drug and Medication Administration**

- Prior to administering a drug or medication, the employee must complete the 5-Rights of Medication Administration to ensure the right drug or medication:
  1. Right dose
  2. Right route
  3. Right child
  4. Right time
  5. Right drug or medication
- Drugs or medications will be administered according to the instructions on the label and only with written parental authorization
- A drug or medication will only be administered from its original container as supplied by a pharmacist or its original package, and where the container is clearly labelled
- A drug or medication will only be administered using the appropriate dispenser (e.g. syringe, measuring spoon/cup, etc.).

### **Record-Keeping**

- Records of medication administration will be completed on the spaces available on the Medication Consent Form every time drugs or medications are administered. Completed Medication Consent Forms will be kept in the child's file.
- Where a child's Medication Consent Form includes a schedule outlining specific times to administer the medication and the child is absent, the child's absence will be documented on the spaces provided on the Medication Consent Form and in the classroom daily log book to account for all days during the treatment period (excluding weekends, holidays and planned closures).
- If a dose is missed or given late, reasons will be documented on the record of medication administration and a parent will be notified as soon as possible as it may impact the treatment schedule or the child's health.
- "As needed medication" e.g. inhalers, epi-pen; Medication Consent Form must be completed accurately with specific signs, symptoms and treatment to follow. Upon administering the medication, it is to be documented on the Medication Consent Form as well as in the classroom daily log book. The parent of the child will be notified immediately.

Information about a child's medical needs will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of the child, except when information must be disclosed for the purpose of implementing the procedures in this policy and for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

## **Sleep Policy**

- Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre does not enroll children under 18 months of age.
- All children will be provided with the opportunity to sleep for 2 hours or engage in quiet activities based on their needs.
- All children 18 months to 6 years registered in a toddler or preschool group, who receive child care for six hours or more, will be provided with a scheduled time to rest and/or sleep for at least one hour up to two hours each day, and will be assigned to a cot and clean bedding.

## **Placement of Children for Sleep**

- Children will be placed on individual cots for sleep.

## **Consultation with Parents**

- All parents of children at the child care centre will be advised of the centre's policies and procedures regarding sleep at the time of their child's enrolment and/or any time the policies and procedures are revised, as applicable. This information will be available to parents in the Parent Handbook.
- Employees will consult with parents about their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrolment and at any other appropriate time (e.g. when a child transitions to a new program or room, or at the parent's request).
- Written documentation will be kept in each child's file to reflect the sleep patterns identified by their parent, and updates to the documentation will be made whenever changes are communicated to the child care centre.
- All sleep arrangements will be communicated to staff by management after meeting with the parent/guardian.
- Parents will be advised by the staff of any significant changes in their child's behaviours during sleep and/or sleeping patterns.
- Any changes in sleep behaviours will result in adjustments being made to the child's supervision during sleep time, where appropriate, based on consultation with the child's parent.

## **Direct Visual Checks**

- Direct visual checks of each sleeping child who is in a licensed toddler or preschool age group will be conducted every 30 minutes to look for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours. Direct visual checks will be documented by staff by logging it on the daily Sleep Room Visual Checklist.

- Direct visual checks are not required for children engaging in quiet activities, but these children will be supervised at all times.
- The frequency of direct visual checks and the steps to complete them will depend on the typical sleep patterns of each child and their age, as identified in the sleep supervision procedures provided in this policy.
- Staff will ensure that all sleep areas have adequate lighting available to conduct the direct visual checks of sleeping children.
- Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre does not use electronic sleep monitoring devices.

### **Procedures**

Age Group	Frequency of Direct Visual Checks*
<b>Toddler</b>	Every 30 minutes
<b>Preschool</b>	Every 30 minutes

*\* This is the minimum frequency of direct visual checks. Should a child have symptoms of illness (e.g. a cold) or if there are other issues or concerns related to the child's health, safety and well-being during sleep, the frequency of direct visual checks must be increased. The individual needs of each child during sleep as identified by the parent and/or the child's physician must be followed at all times.*

### **Procedures for Completing Direct Visual Checks**

1. Staff must:
  - i. be physically present beside the child;
  - ii. check each child's general well-being by looking for signs of distress or discomfort including, at a minimum:
    - Laboured breathing;
    - Changes in skin temperature;
    - Changes in lip and/or skin colour;
    - Whimpering or crying; and
    - Lack of response to touch or voice.
  
2. Where signs of distress or discomfort are observed, the staff who conducted the direct visual check must attempt to wake the child up. Where no signs of distress or discomfort are observed, proceed to step 3.
  - a) Where the child wakes up, staff must:**
    - i. attend to the child's needs;
    - ii. separate the child from other children if the child appears to be ill;

- iii. Document the incident in the daily communication log and in the child's symptoms of ill health record, where applicable.

**b) Where the child does not wake up, staff must immediately:**

- i. perform appropriate first aid and CPR, if required;
- ii. inform other staff, students and volunteers in the room of the situation;
- iii. contact emergency services or, where possible, direct another individual to contact emergency services;
- iv. separate the child from other children or vice versa if the child appears to be ill;
- v. inform the supervisor/designate of the situation; and
- vi. contact the child's parent;

**c) Where the child must be taken home or to the hospital, the supervisor or designate must immediately:**

- i. Contact the child's parent to inform them of the situation and next steps.

**d) Where the child's condition has stabilized, and/or after the child has been taken home and/or to the hospital, the staff who conducted the direct visual check and any staff who assisted with responding to the incident must:**

- i. must inform management
- ii. follow the serious occurrence policies and procedures, where applicable;
- iii. document the incident in the daily written record; and
- iv. document the child's symptoms of illness in the child's records.

**3. Staff must:**

- i. adjust blankets as needed;
- ii. ensure the child's head is not covered;
- iii. ensure there are no other risks of suffocation present;
- iv. document the date, time and initial each direct visual check on the room's Sleep Room Visual Checklist and; verbally inform other staff in the room that the check has been completed, where applicable and possible.

**Sun Safety Policy**

Staff will implement and adhere to the Sun Safety Policy to protect themselves and the children in their program from harmful rays of the sun.

- Parents will be responsible for providing sunscreen for each child not in the same cohort.
- Your child's name must be clearly labeled on the bottle
- Sunscreen is not shared or borrowed due to allergies.
- Sunscreen is to be applied to their child prior to drop off
- Reapplication will take place 20 minutes prior to being outside by staff.

- Sunscreen must be a minimum protection factor of SPF 30 be used

The Child Care and Early Years Act has two outdoor play times - morning and afternoon for a minimum of 60 minutes.

Staff are responsible for monitoring the temperature, UV rays and wind gusts to determine if it is safe to be outside. If the temperature is +35°C or high ultraviolet (UV) periods, staff and children will not be permitted to go outside. Alternative indoor gross motor activities will be provided.

During warmer temperatures, modified timing will be implemented (limit time outdoors, seek shade, offer water and water play etc.).

Drinking water will be accessible to children during all outdoor play times. Staff will encourage children to take periodic water breaks to ensure they are hydrated. While outdoors, children are encouraged to wear their own hat as additional protection from the sun.

### **Removal of a Child from the Program**

The removal of any child from the centre is a very difficult decision. Reasons for removal will vary depending on the situation. All avenues are explored before deciding on removal as the last resort. Before the removal of any child, Management must hold a meeting with the child's parent(s). The Director of Community Services and CAO will be consulted by the Manager. After these meetings a formal letter will be issued. Should the parents wish to further discuss this matter a meeting will be arranged with the Director of Community Services. All decision of the Director of Community Services are final.

### **Behavior Management Policy**

Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre wants to ensure that children have a safe and positive experience that promotes their growth as a learner.

Management will conduct periodic observations of staff, their program and interactions to ensure that it is consistent with our program statement and legislations.

If there were concerns regarding contravention of this policy by a staff or parent the following would take place:

- The manager would bring the concern regarding behavior management to the attention of the staff member.
- A meeting with regard to the concern would take place. Discussion would ensure that the policies are clearly understood.

- A record of the meeting would be kept and signed by the parties involved. It would become a part of the staff file and a copy would be placed in the Behavior Management file.
- Goals would be set to assist the person in following appropriate practices.
- A follow up schedule of meeting would be set to ensure appropriate expectations are maintained.
- Other team members may be consulted for suggestions.

Violation of the policy may result in a meeting with the CAO of Huron East and the Director of Community Services, the Ministry of Education Program Advisor, the Children's Aid Society along it would be reportable to the College of Early Childhood Educators. Staff may be suspended or terminated pending on disciplinary action with consultation from the above parties.

### **Risky Play Policy**

#### **Purpose:**

To ensure that employees at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre are taking appropriate precautions when promoting Risky Play and that parents are aware of and acknowledge in writing acceptance of Risky Play approaches to childhood development.

#### **Scope:**

All employees of the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre.

#### **Definitions:**

Risky Play: Defined as play that involves reasonable, healthy and safe risks under the supervision of an adult.

#### **Policy:**

Staff at Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre will adhere to the Risky Play Policy.

*'Engaging is Risky Play is about creating opportunities for children (and adults) to explore and test their own capacities, to manage risk and to grow as capable, resourceful and resilient children and adults.'* (National Quality Standard, Professional Learning Program, 2013).

At Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre, our aim to ensure that children are provided a safe, fun and interactive learning environment. Often, as a child care

provider, we are continually assessing risk and danger to ensure the wellbeing of the children (and stakeholders) are being met.

As an organization, we recognize and appreciate the significance of Risky Play in the evolution of early childhood development. It provides children with the ability to foster and enhance their skills of:

- Problem-solving
- Develop skills in negotiating (including risks)
- Build resilience, perseverance and persistence
- Extend their balance, orientation skills and coordination
- Become aware of their own capabilities and limits
- Make appropriate risk decisions
- Develop self-regulation
- Take acceptable risks
- Make decisions
- Learn about the consequences (positive and negative) of risk taking
- Gain confidence and independence
- Become creative and curious
- Learn how to use equipment safely

Management and educational staff will continuously assess whether a learning environment will foster the learning outcomes promoting healthy risk-taking and avoid hazardous situations. Our Service will continually evaluate the environment as well as the skill level of each child participating in Risky Play.

**Roles and responsibilities of Management and Educators are as follows:**

- Staff Educators are responsible for conducting an ongoing safety check on their indoor and outdoor environment.
- Staff Educators are responsible for conducting a Play Ground Check of their assigned outdoor space; sign and date the checklist.
- If, any hazards or dangers present themselves, it must be reported to Management immediately.
- Management will then contact the appropriate individuals to have issue remedied in a time manner.
  - Management will communicate with Educators and families-if necessary.
- Staff Educators must provide active supervision at all times in both indoor and outdoor environments

- Staff Educators provide direct, constant and proximal monitoring of children undertaking activities that involve some risk and recognizing when the ratio of educators to children needs to be increased
- Management will notify The Ministry of Education of any Serious Occurrences within 24 hours of the incident.
- If a child is involved in a serious incident/situation at the Centre parents will be notified. Details of the incident/situation are to be recorded on the Incident/Accident Report on the day of the incident. Parents are to be provided with an Incident/Accident report the same day.
- Educators are to actively encourage and acknowledge children's competence to assess risks and possible consequences (It is important to involve children in the risk assessment process, as this provides added benefits of being able to talk through hazards, learn about assessing and managing appropriate risks for themselves.)
- Children learn new skills in a safe environment through supervision and adherence to the correct educator to child ratios
- Children are encouraged to take risks through the use of positive language, guidance and enthusiasm
- Staff Educators uphold their duty to care and demonstrate compassion; demonstrate that this is taken seriously
- Management and Educators meet their legal obligations and responsibilities
- Management and/or Educators will mentor and support families' knowledge about the benefits of providing children with risky play experiences – literature can be provided
- Respect a family's decision and right to refuse their child from participating in Risky Play
- Staff Educators are to provide the child with safety precautions and role model physical activity
- Staff Educators are to provide a balance of between structured and unstructured activities/play

### **Role and Responsibility of Parents**

Parents/Guardians are required to inform themselves of the benefits of Risky Play as part of their child's developmental curriculum. It is also required for the parent/guardian to complete the Risky Play Acknowledgement Form to confirm that their child is permitted to participate in Risky Play as an addition to our curriculum.

If, a parent/guardian chooses to not permit their child from participating in Risky Play, their child will still be provided with all the necessary components of the curriculum.

Should a parent/guardian require more information, it is their responsibility to communicate with Management and/or Educators. Parents/guardians will be provided with additional resources and materials at request to ensure an informed decision is being made.

### **Prohibited Practices**

Prohibited practices is any behavior that is deemed negative or punitive when managing unwanted behavior. Any practice that risks the physical and emotional well-being will be deemed as a prohibited practice and dealt with according to the Centre's Behavior Management Policy.

Children benefit from positive guidance and interactions during their interactions with adults. Staff, provide a firm but gentle approach when speaking to a child. Staff speak to children using age and developmentally appropriate language when speaking.

Children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behavior. Any practice based on harmful disciplinary methods that affect the emotional or physical wellbeing of children are not permitted at the Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre.

*These prohibited practices include the following:*

- Corporal punishment of the child;
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purpose of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- Locking the exits, of the child care centre or home child care 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 policy and procedures;
- 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 the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; Leaving children unsupervised; or Any form of abuse - physical, sexual, emotional and/or neglect

- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making them eat or drink against their will

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

An Emergency Management Policy and Procedure has been developed to ensure the safety of the children and staff at Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre. The children and staff participate in emergency preparedness training and drills throughout the year. If there is an emergency that requires parents to be contacted, Management, staff and/or a Huron East employee will call the parents. If the parents cannot be contacted, the emergency contact will be called.

If evacuation is required the onsite meeting place is behind the booth located at the North-East end of the parking lot.

The off-site location is the Vanastra Community Christian Reformed Church in Vanastra.

Following any emergency situation, all staff, and families will be updated and given directions regarding continuing operations of the centre. This update may be communicated by the way of a group debrief, email, or Centre's voicemail.

### **Serious Occurrence Notification**

It is the policy of Vanastra Early Childhood Learning Centre to ensure the safety of the children and staff. In the event of a Serious Occurrence, during the Centre's operations, the appropriate Ministry directed reporting procedure will be followed. As well, a public notification will be posted for parents to view in our entrance way.

A Serious Occurrence is:

- Death of a child
- Allegations of Abuse and/or Neglect
- Life-threatening Injury or Illness
- Missing or Unsupervised Children
- Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations (fire, flood, gas leak, detection of Carbon Monoxide, outbreak, lockdown, or temporary closure)