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## **Kinder College ELC Program Statement**

Kinder College Early Learning Centre's mission is to provide a safe and stimulating program that enables our young learners to develop emotionally, socially, intellectually, creatively and physically.

We see children as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential. We understand and respect that they grow up in families with diverse social, cultural and linguistic perspectives. We believe in order to thrive, every child should feel like he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor to his or her surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed.

The centre utilizes a play-based (Emergent) curriculum, where each child is given the opportunity to work on self-chosen tasks in an attractive environment especially designed and equipped to meet the child's needs. It is hoped that this, along with daily routines, will instill a sense of independence, responsibility, and self worth within the child. The program will provide opportunities for child-initiated and adult supported experiences and will incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children. Educators plan and implement a curriculum that is ever-evolving based on the children's changing interest and developmental goals. Educators document children's interest during play and developmental goals determined from visual daily observations or through our development assessments. Developmental assessment tools are utilized in order provide a snapshot of where the child is developmentally so teachers' can set relevant developmental goals but it also provides accountability, so we know if our programming strategies are effective. We strive to provide an environment where learning is an enjoyable and rewarding experience where children can develop their potential at an individual pace.

Kinder College future decision-making policies about children will be in-line with four guiding foundational conditions that are important for children to grow and flourish: Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement, and Expression.

**Belonging** refers to a sense of connectedness to others, an individual's experiences of being valued, of forming relationships with others and making contributions as part of a group, a community, the natural world.

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**Well-being** addresses the importance of physical and mental health and wellness. It incorporates capacities such as self help (independence), sense of self, and self-regulation skills.

**Engagement** suggests a state of being involved and focused. When children are able to explore the world around them with their natural curiosity and exuberance, they are fully engaged. Through this type of play and inquiry, they develop skills such as problem solving, creative thinking, and innovating, which are essential for learning and success in school and beyond.

**Expression or communication** (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words, and use of materials, children develop capacities for increasingly complex communication. Opportunities to explore materials support creativity, problem solving, and mathematical behaviours. Language-rich environments support growing communication skills, which are foundational for literacy.

In addition to the foundations, Kinder College recognizes four key relationships that directly and indirectly support/enrich children's learning experience.

**Families** are experts on their children. Families also bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives and can be a valuable resource. Therefore, we ensure families feel that they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning, and deserve to be engaged in a meaningful way. The program will seek to foster the engagement of and ongoing communication and positive relationship with parents about the program and their children.

**Educators** are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. They are knowledgeable, caring, reflective, and resourceful professionals. They too bring diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. They collaborate with others to create engaging environments and experiences to foster children's learning and development. Educators are lifelong learners. They take responsibility for their own learning and make decisions about ways to integrate knowledge from theory, research, their own experience, and their understanding of the individual children and families they work with. The program will seek to ensure that every educator feel he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor, deserves the opportunity to engage in meaningful work and positive relationships with management, parents and students and the opportunity for professional development.

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The **environment** is the context in which learning takes place. The environment is “the third teacher” and is valued for its power to organize, promote relationships, and educate. Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways. When the environment supports children’s growing autonomy and independence, challenging behaviours are reduced and educators can focus more fully on observing, interacting, and extending children’s learning and development in meaningful ways. The program will plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child’s learning and development will be supported.

**Pedagogical Leaders** are competent and capable, rich in experience. While our main function as pedagogical leaders is to ensure the highest quality health, safety, nutrition and well-being for our children, supporting educators in applying pedagogical approaches and practices we feel is equally important. We seek to work alongside other educators to both guide and study the learning and teaching process. We help create a culture of curiosity, openness, and trust that focuses on how learning happens for both the child and the adult. Pedagogical leaders are less concerned with answers and more interested in questions. They don't tell others what to do, but rather help them make connections and form interpretations – that is, they help them make meaning of their own thinking. The quality of experiences in an early years program improves when leaders and educators are continuously thinking and reflecting together. Facilitate critical reflection and collaborative inquiry. We will actively seek and promote professional development opportunities for teachers. We will support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parent and the staff. In order to have accountability in our decision making, and to ensure continued growth, we will document and review the impact of the strategies set out in its program statement on the children and their families. Through our curriculum philosophy, paradigm on how we see children, our approach to pedagogical learning and training of teachers we hope to offer the most optimal learning experience for all our children.

**Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child-care providers and staff.**

We have an open door policy with Parents. Staff will greet families and children each day on arrival and share information pertaining to the child through verbal or written communication. Staff will communicate with

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parents via phone calls, emails, Tadpole app and monthly calendars. Teachers will make themselves available for Parent/Teacher meetings when the needs of the child or parent require it. Documentation is also displayed for families to view the classroom activities.

Staff will practice and encourage inclusive and positive interactions. We will foster an atmosphere of inclusion, cooperation, sharing and kindness. This behaviour is modeled through RECE's interactions with colleagues, children and families.

Staff will encourage every child's self-help skills. Each child is viewed as capable and independence is encouraged, with assistance from RECE's as required. Staff will challenge the children's skills so as to facilitate the development of new and stronger skills. The teachers will also encourage the children to be helpful to one another also.

All staff will follow the CCEYA guidelines for Behaviour Guidance. We will use positive language when talking with children and adults. We will guide behaviour through the use of positive language, questions and encouragement. RECE's will not use Prohibited Practices, i.e. corporal punishment, verbal degradation, confinement and deprivation of basic needs (including food, clothing or bedding). Each staff member will review and sign off on the centres policies and procedures prior to commencing supervision duties in the classroom.

### **Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate**

Educators will model the use of positive language and behaviour at all time when engaging with the children and other adults. We will work to help children to develop communication and problems solving skills in their daily interactions.

To encourage self-regulation, we strive to create an environment where every child feels safe and supported to find a variety of ways in which to express their emotions. We work to teach our children to recognize their emotions and assist in discovering successful strategies to cope when needed.

### **Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry**

Children make their interests known in a variety of ways in the classroom. To uncover such interests, the RECE's observe, listen, discuss and document interactions. Implementing the Four Foundations of How Does Learning Happen (Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression) the educators will create an environment that allows the children to

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explore the topic of interest, and the world around them. Through play based learning, children will develop the skills needed to expand their abilities as well as their knowledge, natural curiosities and understanding of their world.

**Provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences**

The RECE will follow the child's lead in interactions and in developing an environment that is rich in opportunities for exploration. Reflecting on documentation, we discover the child's current interests, which guide us in the materials we provide and the opportunities we offer in all areas of the child's development. While considering the needs of the group, individual needs are always considered as well. The environment will then be set up to encourage the children to challenge their abilities, expand their interests and develop relationships.

**Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported**

From regular observations of the children's activities and interactions we will plan a program that will stimulate the interests and development of the children. We will provide a variety of activities, both active and quiet, which will meet the needs of the developing child regardless of the level of need and development. We will make changes in our environment and program as the children's interests and developmental needs change.

**Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving care.**

We will follow the guidelines of the CCEYA in setting our program. We strive to provide equal opportunities for all children to find the active and quiet time that meets their individual needs. We make use of the playground for two hours every day, weather permitting. Nap time is provided for two hours per day after the midday meal (the exception is sleep time is based on the needs of the individual child in our infant program).

**Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children**

The Centre has adopted the Tadpoles App as an way for educators to correspond with parents daily by sending photos, documentation and updates electronically.

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**Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff**

Kinder College ELC also has partnerships with a number of Ontario Early Childhood Education Diploma programs. We provide student placements enabling us to support future Early Childhood Educators by sharing our experience and knowledge with them as they prepare for their new career. This also provides children with new learning experiences and enthusiastic interactions with the students.

**Support Staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at a child care centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning**

Kinder College ELC has made our classroom and our facility available to employees of the child care centres in the areas. KCELC is committed to the ongoing professional development of all staff.

All KCELC staff participate in mandatory training as required by the Child Care & Early Years Act, 2014, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, and by the City of Toronto, including, Standard First Aid & CPR Certification.

In addition, staff participate in position specific training both in-house and off site to support their professional learning and development, and to ensure they have a strong understanding of current policies, procedures and research materials. Registered Early Childhood Educators are required to meet the Standards of Practice and Continuous Professional Learning requirements of the College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE).

**Document and review the impact of strategies set out in this statement on the children and their families**

We will use documentation, reflection, as well as formal assessments such as ITERS-R (Infant and Toddler Environmental Rating Scale – Revised) and ECERS-R (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale – Revised) to continually evaluate our program and its effects on the children and their families.

Staff, Students, and Volunteers will read this Program Statement and sign off prior to interacting with the children, when the statement is updated and on an annual basis. The Supervisor will review this yearly.

Each program within KCELC will use a binder for observations, plans and documentation to support understanding. Documentation will be shared with families.