



### **Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre- Program Statement**

For over 30 years, Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre has provided our community with quality childcare based on the foundation that the quality of care and education children receive sets the foundation for their lifelong learning, behaviour and health. Our Centre is recognized as a leader of child care services in the City of Ottawa, through our continued innovative approach to the changing needs of our clients. Based in D. Roy Kennedy Public School, we are pleased to offer three programs: Full-day Preschool Program for children 2.5 years old until they attend Kindergarten; Extended Day Kindergarten Program (on behalf of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board) for children attending either junior or senior Kindergarten; and a School Age Program for children up to age 12.

Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre recognizes that all **children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential**. Our Centre recognizes the uniqueness of each child and the importance of play in the lives of children and our focus is to provide our children with a safe and nurturing environment where they can develop their social, emotional, physical and cognitive skills as they progress throughout their early to middle school years. Using the Ministry of Education's common provincial framework to guide programming and pedagogy – How Does Learning Happen? (HDLH), our Centre addresses all four main categories of conditions important for children's healthy development:

- **Belonging: Cultivating Authentic Relationships and Connections**  
Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- **Well-Being: Nurturing Healthy Development and Well-Being**  
Every child is developing a sense of self, health and well-being.
- **Engagement: Creating Contexts for Learning Through Exploration, Play and Inquiry**  
Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world and body, mind and senses.

- **Expression: Fostering Communication and Expression In All Forms**  
Every child is a capable communicator who expresses herself/himself in many ways.

Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre is a licensed Child Care Centre by the Ministry of Education (Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014). Our Centre is required to meet all regulations of this Act, in addition to the health, safety and fire regulations as dictated by the City of Ottawa Department of Public Health, The Ottawa Fire Services, and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. The Ministry of Education Program Advisor annually monitors the standards for safety, staff training, program quality and compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act. The Centre is owned and operated by a non-profit corporation. It is administered by a Board of Directors, comprised of the Centre Director, staff members and interested parents and community members. The staff at Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre consist of a Centre Director and Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECE's), registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators and have a range of experience befitting their positions. All staff must have Criminal Reference Check/Vulnerable Sector Check and current Standard First Aid & CPR Training. Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre also has in place several policies. Employees must read all policies and procedures and sign an acknowledgement form on commencement of employment and annually thereafter. **The policies include, but are not limited to:**

- Administration of Drugs & Medication Policy
- Anaphylactic Policy and Individual Child Plan & Emergency Procedures
- Fire Evacuation Procedures
- Playground Safety Policy
- Police Records Check/Vulnerable Sector Policy
- Program Statement Implementation Policy
- Prohibited Practices Policy
- Sanitary Practices Policy
- Serious Occurrence Policy
- Sleep Supervision Policy
- Staff Training & Development Policy
- Supervision of Volunteers & Students Policy

The Board of Directors designates the Centre Director as signing authority to monitor, record and review as necessary, all practices and policies on behalf of Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre as required by the CCEYA.

Review of policies and procedures with volunteers, students and substitute teachers with a signature to verify reading and understanding prior to interacting with the children is all done. All volunteers, students and substitute teachers are also required to obtain a Criminal Reference Check/Vulnerable Sector Check.

All staff, students, volunteers and substitute teachers are monitored on an ongoing basis by the Centre Director. Each non-compliance will be addressed immediately with the expectation to move towards continued compliance.

Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre **promotes the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children.** When provided with a safe and caring environment in which children know they are valued, our children develop a sense of well-being which contributes to their overall growth and development. The WKSAC staff provide consistent boundaries which ensure the safety of the children while encouraging them to take supported risks in their exploratory play and learning. The Centre's atmosphere of warmth and welcoming fosters each child's sense of security and acceptance. Close communication with parents informs us of each child's health and nutritional concerns. Each staff member is aware of all food allergies and dietary requirements. Our preschool children are served a nutritious, balanced lunch as outlined in the Canada Food Guide, and all children receive two nutritious snacks each day. Our weekly lunch and snack menus are posted in a visible area for parents. Meal and snack times are wonderful and rich learning opportunities for children to engage in exploratory conversations with staff and peers about foods, nutrition, personal, family and cultural experiences, etc. To enhance the safety and well-being of all, staff are trained in First Aid and CPR, and have had anaphylaxis training.

We continually strive to **support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents and staff.** Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre provides support, assistance and direction so that children will come to understand their potential and accept not only their differences, but also those of others and gain knowledge to deal with everyday experiences. Staff habitually model respectful communication, demonstrating positive interactions, and building collaborative and cooperative relationships with the children, their parents, and our community partners. This modelling gives our children the opportunity to develop meaningful strategies in learning how to communicate, share ideas, accept differences, and effectively and peacefully resolve conflicts. Phrases commonly heard in our environment include “That's interesting. Tell me more.”, “I can tell you're angry, please use your words to tell me what's wrong.”, “Good listening!”. Our conversations with the children reveal their individuality and interests which in turn guides our programming. Our ongoing communication with parents allows the mutual exchange of insights and information related to all aspects of the child's life.

We **encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.** Staff will model conflict resolution skills by facilitating discussions between children that focus on compromise, empathy, and positive interactions. Children need opportunities to develop self-regulation by practicing them, and having them modelled, within a positive setting with peers and adults (i.e. I see you are taking turns with your friend). Staff will set realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations to support the development of each child's self-regulation. For example, during circle time children will be encouraged to sit and participate but it is important to recognize that some children will be able to sit longer and attend to an activity for a

longer duration. By adapting a circle to reflect the developmental levels of each child, the children learn what is expected of them and continue to develop self-regulatory skills.

At Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre we **foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry**. Children are encouraged to work together with our educators to expand and develop a wide range of skills and competencies based on an emergent curriculum that is spontaneous and responsive to their immediate interests. In addition to structured learning experiences, we support a child's innate sense of curiosity and wonder by facilitating an inquiry based learning environment which encourages them to explore the space and select from a number of open ended play based activities. Inquiry based learning begins by posing questions, challenges, and scenarios for the children to think through, allowing them to develop problem solving strategies and begin to pose questions of their own. When staff model this inquiry based model it leads to children becoming more active in their learning and helps them to independently solve problems on their own. Through formal and informal observations and discussions, our children are offered a wide variety of activities and experiences such as creative, dramatic and language arts, science activities, outdoor experiences, field trips and special presentations from visitors in these areas.

The Centre **provides child-initiated and adult-supported experiences**. Children learn best through play; play is children's work. We provide time for children to invest in their interests and everyone learns best when their interest is sparked. Staff is here to enrich and expand children's ideas and interests by asking open ended questions and providing materials to extend the children's learning. Our educators are always available to support and encourage the children in all areas of their development including responding to their emotional needs in a warm and caring manner. Opportunity and ample time is provided for individual, small group and large group interactions which allow each child to follow, explore and expand their interests, abilities and development.

We strive to **plan for and create a positive learning environment in which each child's learning and development will be supported**. Through the use of observations and by actively engaging with the children, our educators are able to plan activities based on the children's current interests. Staff is following the ELECT framework (Early Learning for Every Child Today) created by the Ministry of Education. In our preschool program and all other full day programming offered on non-instructional days, staff is able to adapt and find flexibility within the day to day schedule. This allows for longer periods of uninterrupted play, creating a natural "flow" to the day with fewer transitions, resulting in a calmer environment for all children and educators. Maintaining a flexible schedule provides more opportunity for spontaneous learning moments and allows staff to take advantage of flexible space. E.g. gym time, music and movement in gross motor room, and extended outdoor play. On instructional days, our before and after school programs provide a needed change of pace for children after the school day. While the children are engaged in play, our programs provide opportunities for children to learn how to make responsible decisions, how to manage risk and how to respond to conflict. All of our programs strive to provide a stimulating yet relaxed environment allowing for all children to create emotional connections with the other children and educators within

each group. Educators are encouraged to provide feedback and make recommendations regarding the purchasing of materials; these recommendations are based on the educator's knowledge, professional experience and through the use of observations of the children. Maintaining an open and ongoing dialogue with the parents of children attending our Centre allows for educators and parents to share information on the changing interests of each child.

**The use of space at Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre incorporates indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time into the day, and gives consideration to individual needs of the children receiving care.** Children have opportunities to engage in many activities within our **indoor spaces**: structured and unstructured activities, co-operative games, creative arts and crafts, free play, dramatic play, circle time, manipulative toys, music and movement and large block play in order to satisfy the need for individual and active play. Preschool children are provided a daily rest time of up to two hours with comfortable cots, sheets and blankets. After resting, children are able to engage in quiet activities until all children are awake. Quiet areas and activities are available to all children throughout the day. These activities may include tabletop games, puzzles, books, playdough and access to paper, crayons and markers. Kindergarten and school age children are provided an hour dedicated to quiet activities on non-instructional days. Our Centre has access to great **outdoor spaces** where children are free to be active and explore their surroundings. One yard contains green space and trees for exploring and allows for running, kicking balls, organized games and sports or for just playing with friends. There are paved areas for skipping, hopscotch, and ride-on toys. A sandbox is available for the children to enjoy and a playstructure to suit the abilities of all children in our programs (installed 2015). Our other yard provides the older children with a large grassed area to explore and participate in free play or organized sports. Our paved area provides lots of space for ball play and has painted pavement games available such as hopscotch and four square. Benches are available for school age children to sit and socialize with their peers.

Our Centre **fosters the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children.** Parents are the experts on their children and bring knowledge of their child's individual needs and interests. Our educators bring knowledge of children's developmental needs and together we can work to help children reach their potential. Face to face conversations occur daily at our Centre. Communications stressing children's interests and achievements versus problem centered discussions allow parents and staff to have a more positive relationship, resulting in open two way communication. Many strategies are used to communicate the learning happening at Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre: newsletters, calendars, learning stories, website, and bulletin boards are used to provide information on what is occurring at our Centre. Parents are provided access to our Parent Handbook as well as our Program Statement. Invitations to Centre events are extended to all parents and parents are encouraged to consider joining our Board of Directors.

**We involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.** Our children come from a variety of neighbourhoods

allowing for families to develop relationships in the broader community. As we are based in a public elementary school we are fortunate to have opportunities to partner with the school in some of its activities eg. Holiday Celebration, fund-raising events, etc. Activities such as walks in the community, visiting the local shopping center, visits from community helpers (e.g. mailman, librarian, etc), and exchanging visits with other child care centres, etc. contribute to the child's exploration and awareness of our community. Our Centre welcomes students on placements (e.g. ECE, Co-op, and high school students fulfilling their community service hour requirements, many of whom are graduates of our Centre!). Our Board of Directors is comprised of parent volunteers (those who currently have children in our Centre and those whose children have graduated) and other community members. Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre's educators are committed to the children and families of our Centre and work in partnership with our parents and community representatives to ensure a high standard of quality care that embraces diversity.

Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age **Centre supports our Centre's educators in their continuous learning.** Professional learning opportunities available in the early childhood community, such as workshops, training sessions and conferences are shared with staff. Our educators are supported and encouraged to sign up for workshop opportunities as they become available. Our staff of professional educators routinely exchange new ideas, techniques and skills acquired through webinars, training sessions, workshops, research papers and books with their colleagues in our Centre. Staff keeps an open dialogue going with each other and share their professional thoughts and observations of the children attending our Centre. Attending external workshops, conferences and communities of practice allow staff to learn and share with colleagues in the larger early childhood education community. Upon returning from professional learning opportunities, staff are encouraged and given time to share any new ideas with their coworkers. Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre often takes on placement students from Algonquin College enrolled in the Early Childhood Education program. Mentorship opportunities allow our educators to share their professional knowledge and skills as well as learn from the students beginning their journey in the field of early childhood education.

Our Centre will **document and review the impact of the strategies contained in this Program Statement on the children and their families.** Our educators are free to discuss, strategize and bring forward any new ideas for ways in which to strengthen our program. All educators, supply staff, volunteers and early childhood education students on placement in our Centre are required to read and sign the Program Statement prior to working with the children at Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre. Our Program Statement is a living document that will be reviewed annually and amended accordingly. All staff will have opportunities to share new ideas and strategies for our Program Statement on an annual basis.

The educators of Whitehaven Kindergarten School Age Centre are committed to continuing to provide the high quality child care experience that our children, their families and the community have relied upon during our long history