Hippo Nursery School

Parent Handbook

Updated: July 1, 2026

This parent handbook is available to current and prospective parents as an online pdf on our website. A printed copy is available for parents and staff to refer to in the school office and foyer.

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Welcome to Hippo Nursery School

Daisy Dotsch founded Hippo Nursery School in 1947 as a non-profit, parent-teacher run nursery school to serve the needs of families in this community. Vaughan Co-op as it was then known, was a pioneer of the preschool co-operative movement in Toronto and much of the philosophy that evolved here is now taught in early education programs in colleges and universities. Daisy passed away in November 2014 in her 100^{th} year.

In 2014, we officially changed our name to Hippo Nursery School to finally reflect how we have been affectionately known in the community for many years. Our Hippo sign and logo was designed by Melissa Frew, a former Hippo parent and unveiled in May 2014.

By joining Hippo Nursery School, you have made a special commitment to your child by becoming an active participant in their early education. We hope that after this positive beginning, you will be inspired to continue your involvement through your children's future school years as well.

For many families, active participation at the school will include a bi-weekly morning duty day during which parents, family members, or caregivers work alongside the staff. Your bi-weekly duty days are a fundamental part of the Hippo experience. They allow us to deliver an excellent child-to-adult ratio for maximum enrichment of the children. Duty days also facilitate the formation of closer relationships between educators and families and give families a greater knowledge of child development and early childhood education.

Families contribute to the smooth running of the school and create a community by undertaking a parent job, attending our general meetings, and volunteering at maintenance work days and fundraising events. Through your family's commitment of time, skills and energy to Hippo Nursery School, you will reap rewards in the quality of the program, in friendships with other families and through contributing to the school and community.

A committee of dedicated staff and parents worked on a book about the history of Hippo Nursery School. Copies of *A Patchwork of Memories* are available at the school so that you can read about the school, its community and the history of childcare over the last 65 years.

Please read this handbook carefully, make note of any questions or comments you may have and keep it handy for reference.

Thank you making a commitment to Hippo Nursery School.

Hippo Nursery School Program Statement Overview

The Hippo Nursery School philosophy is defined by a fundamentally child-centred approach to all programming and by the active participation of parents and caregivers in that programming.

All programs are play-based and as active learners, the children are central to their own educational process. We view all children as competent, capable and rich in potential. The children's ideas and interests emerge and form the basis for their experiences, while the environment provides the materials and feedback that support their development. Children are given the freedom to use their imagination, and to develop their creativity and independence, with no pressure to conform or compete.

In addition, the participation of parents and family members is highly valued by Hippo Nursery School and is an integral part of the Nursery School process. Families are involved in both the classroom and the operation of the school and in partnership with the staff and teachers, enrich the lives of all of the children and have the opportunity to learn from one another.

Structured as a parent/teacher Nursery School, Hippo Nursery School stresses the spirit of cooperation amongst all staff, parents and family members. Parents and staff are all workers and members at Hippo Nursery School who provide early childhood education in our community. Hippo Nursery School also recognizes clear lines of accountability, and is committed to providing an inclusive and safe environment that follows *How Does Learning Happen?*, Ontario's pedagogy for the early years as a guiding document and approach to our daily program and practices. Please see our Program Statement and Implementation Policy for our full Program Statement.

Hippo Nursery School Staff

Hippo Nursery School consists of parents, the elected board of directors, and the staff. In general, we are directly responsible to each other. Specifically, the staff is responsible to the board of directors, who is responsible to the parents. The supervisor, teachers and school assistants are participating members of the school community as well as employees. This helps nurture Hippo 's tradition of parent-teacher equality and maintain our high quality.

Hippo Nursery School is recognized by the Early Childhood Education departments of several colleges and universities as a field placement for their student teachers. They bring fresh ideas and new experiences to the program.

Hippo Nursery School employs at least three professionally trained Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), one Supervisor, at least three Early Childhood Assistants, a financial manager, a cook, a cleaner as well as any further support staff needed to accomplish necessary tasks to run the school.

Enrollment Information

Our school year begins in September and children who are at least 18 months old in September are eligible to enroll. Children stay in the same class for the entire school year, and

move up the following year unless space becomes available in the next group and the child is ready to move up.

Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care program (CWELCC)

Hippo Nursery School has been enrolled in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program (CWELCC) program since October 2022. Our parent fees will continue to be reduced according to the Government of Ontario requirements until a daily rate of $12.00 per day is reached. In 2025, parent fees were reduced to a maximum of $22.00 per day. Please see our **2026 Program Options and Monthly Fees** for details.

School Operating Schedule

Hippo Nursery School is a twelve-month program from Monday to Friday, 8:15 AM to 5:30 PM. We are closed for two weeks over the winter holidays, one week over March Break and the week before Labour Day, as well as all statutory holidays and Easter Monday.

2026-2027 Scheduled School Closures

August 2026	**Monday, August 3rd** Simcoe Day (Civic Holiday)
	August 31st to Sept. 4th Program Set-Up & Staff Training
September 2026	**Monday, September 7th** Labour Day (statutory holiday)
October 2026	**Monday, October 12th** Thanksgiving (statutory holiday)
December 2026 &	**Monday, December 21st to Friday, January 1st,** School closed for Winter Break
January 2027	(Dec. 25, 26 & Jan 1 – statutory holidays)
February 2027	**Monday, February 15th**, Family Day (statutory holiday)
March 2027	**Monday, March 15th to Friday, March 19th**: March Break
	Friday, March 26th Good Friday (statutory holiday)
	Monday, March 29th Easter Monday
May 2027	**Monday, May 17th** Victoria Day (statutory holiday)
July 2027	**Thursday, July 1st,** Canada Day (statutory holiday)
August 2027	**Monday, August 2nd** Simcoe Day (Civic Holiday)
	August 30 – **September 3rd** Program Set Up and Staff Training

In severe weather such as a blizzard, the school will be closed when the Toronto District School Board closes its schools.

Capacity and Age Groups and Ratios

Hippo Nursery School is licensed for 42 children. A toddler group for children 18 to 30 months and two preschool groups for children 30 months to 5 years old.

Ratios *(Based on the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014)*
The ratio for toddlers is 1 staff to 5 children
The ratio for preschoolers is 1 staff to 8 children

Reduced Ratios
Ratios can be reduced to 2/3 90 minutes after opening (8:15 to 9:45), during rest time, and 60 minutes prior to closing, but never outside in the playground.
Reduced ratios for toddlers are 1 adult to 8 children
Reduced ratio for preschoolers is 1 adult to 12 children

Daily Schedules

These daily schedules may change seasonally and are flexible to meet the children's needs.

Younger Group (Toddlers)
Maximum 10 children with 1 RECE teacher & 1 assistant & 1 duty day volunteer

8:15 – 9:00 children arrive, wash hands - free play

9:00 -9:40 Planned activities/Child Initiated Activities

9:40 – 10:10 Washroom/Handwashing/snack

10:10 – 11:10 Outdoor play/Neighbourhood Walks

11:10 – 11:30 Group time/Handwashing

11:30 – 12:00 Lunch/Washroom

12:00 -2:00 Sleep time or quiet play

2:00 – 2:40 Indoor planned program, washroom or diapers

2:40 -3:15 Washroom, wash hands, snack

3:15 – 4:15 Outdoor program - playground or walk

4:15 - Pick-up time for full-day children

4:15 -5:30 Indoor program, child-initiated activities, hand washing, snack, pick-up - can be anytime until 5:30

Preschool Program (Middle Group)
Maximum 16 children with 1 RECE, 1 Assistant & 1 duty day volunteer

8:15 – 9:00 Children arrive, wash hands / free play

9:00 – 10:10 Indoor planned program, child-initiated activities

10:10 – 10:45 Washroom/wash hands, snack, group time

10:45 – 11:00 Group time

11:00 - 12:00 Outdoor program – playground or walk

12:00 – 12:30 Lunch, washroom

12:30 – 2:00 Sleep time or quiet play

2:00 – 3:00 Outdoor program - playground or walk

3:00 – 3:30 Washroom, wash hands

3:30 -3:45 Snack

3:30 – 4:00 Group time

4:00 – 5:30 Indoor program, child initiated activities, hand washing, snack, pick-up- can be anytime until 5:30

Preschool Program (Older Group)

Maximum 16 children with 1 RECE teacher, 1 assistant & 1 duty day volunteer

8:15 – 9:00 Children arrive, wash hands and join the middle group

9:00 – 10:00 Outdoor program, playground or walk

10:00 – 10:25 Washroom, hand washing, snack

10:25 – 11:30 Indoor planned program, child-initiated play

11:30 – 12:00 Group time, wash hands

12:00 Lunch, washroom

12:30 – 2:00 Nap or quiet play

2:00 – 3:00 Outdoor program – playground or walk

3:00 – 3:30 Washroom, wash hands

3:30 – 3:45 snack

3:45 – 4:00 Group time

4:15 – 5:30 Indoor program, child-initiated activities, hand washing, snack, children can be picked up anytime until 5:30.

These classroom schedules are general guidelines for activities throughout the day and may change to include special events, outings, etc. Our schedule also changes based on individual child needs. Outdoor play will not take place in the event of extreme heat or cold or very stormy conditions. Gross motor activities will be set up for the children inside instead. Please see the Playground Weather Policy and Procedure, under HNS Policies & Procedures for details.

2026 Program Options and Monthly Fees

Hippo School participates in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC). Please see: Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care program (CWELCC)**Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care program (CWELCC)**, for details.

Hippo School enrollment is 5 days per week, 8:15 to 5:30. Fees are based on families participating in one morning duty day every other week. If you are unable to participate in duty days, please use the non-participating fee option.

Enrollment Options	**Frozen Full Monthly Fee (2022)**	**CWELLC Reduction Monthly Fee**	**Daily Rate**
5 Full Days, 8:15 to 5:30 participating in duty days, includes the duty day fee reduction	1670.00	422.00	20.10
5 full days, 8:15 to 5:30 not participating in duty days	1770.00	462.00	22.00

Financial Agreement

Hippo School participates in the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC).

1. Once your child is registered, their enrollment is continuous until you choose to withdraw with one month's written notice.
2. Fees are charged to parents for 252 days per year – our operating days plus 20 days of closure to cover fixed costs. Families do not pay for the remaining days we are closed. We are closed for 1 week in August before Labour Day, 2 weeks for Winter Break, 1 week for March Break, all statutory holidays and Easter Monday.
3. No reduction or refund can be made for absences or due to closures that are beyond the school's control such as severe weather, natural disaster, flooding, etc.
4. Fee credits or refunds will only be provided where families have overpaid for care.

PAYMENTS

Hippo School accepts payment of fees by post-dated cheque. Fees are paid monthly and deposited on the first of the month or closest weekday after.

The following cheques are required <u>at time of registration</u>:

5. **$250.00** deposit towards your child's first month's fees. This will be subtracted from your child's first month's fee. Should you chose to withdraw prior to your child's start date, this becomes your $250.00 withdrawal penalty fee (non-base fee).
6. Parents must submit post-dated cheques twice per year to cover the period from January to June and July to December

Duty Day Fee Reduction

7. Parent participation is the cornerstone of the school but we recognize that some families cannot participate in a bi-weekly duty day. To encourage participation in duty days and recognize the contribution these volunteers make to the school, we offer a small reduction in the monthly fee of $40.00 per month ($20.00 per duty day). Families unable to participate on their scheduled day, must make up the day or pay the $20.00 fee.

Late Payment Penalty Fee

8. A late penalty of 1% monthly (12% per annum) will be charged on all accounts overdue by more than 30 days. Serious delinquency will be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors and might result in losing your space in the school.

WITHDRAWAL:

9. Withdrawal from the school prior to your child's start date forfeits the $250.00 deposit. One month's written notice is required.

10. Withdrawal after your child has started requires one month's written notice, if less than one month's notice, you are responsible for the full month's fees.

Late Pick Up Fees (Non-Base Fee)

Late pick up fees – please pay directly to staff
$15.00 for 6-15 minutes; (non-base fee)
$30.00 for 16-30; (non-base fee)
$45.00 for 31-45 minutes, etc. (non-base fee)

Missed Duty Day Fee (Base Fee)

If unable to make their scheduled duty day, families have 3 options.

1. Switch with another family in your group.
2. Re-schedule to make up the missed duty day in consultation with your child's teacher
3. Pay the missed duty day fee of $20.00

Subsidy

We do not have subsidized spaces. We do have a fund set up by our Founder Daisy Dotsch, that each year is available to be divided between families currently enrolled, who need some financial assistance, at the discretion of the Officers of the Board.

Withdrawal/Discharge

One month's written notice is required to withdraw from the school.

A period of up to 4 weeks is allowed for a child to settle into the school. If, during this period, it is decided by the parents and/or the teacher that the child is not ready for, or not benefiting from the school program, the child may be withdrawn without the usual one month's written notice.

Parents also may be asked to withdraw their child, at any time throughout the year, from the school if they have failed to meet their obligations as members of Hippo Nursery School.

Admission Process

The registration process for September starts once the fees have been set by the budget committee in late December or early January. Priority is given to the younger siblings of Hippo School students and alumni of the school during a two-week internal registration period in February. Any remaining available spaces for September are offered to families on the waiting list in sequence of

Families offered a spot from the waitlist have 2 days to accept or decline. They must then fill out all registration forms and provide payment to confirm their child's enrollment in the school within 1 week of accepting the offer. If the registration package is not received, the offer is forfeit and the spot will be offered to the next waitlist child in that age group.

Waitlist

A new waiting list is maintained by the administration, starting each October for the following September's registration. Tours are organized by the supervisor for those families on the waiting list who are offered spots in the program. The waiting list is not carried over from year to year, families must reapply each year and there is no cost to sign up for the waitlist.

Documents required by enrolled families:

Children:

1. A complete registration package. This package lists all the information that the school requires to ensure your child is safe and well cared for.
2. Child's up-to-date immunization form or a Notarized Exemption Affidavit.

Adults doing duty days:

1. Current Vulnerable Sector Check (Criminal Reference Check)

A volunteer offense declaration stating must be completed each year and criminal reference check must be repeated after 5 years.

2. Immunization & Tuberculin form filled out and signed by a doctor.
3. Proof of COVID-19 vaccination.

Recommended:

4. Certification in Standard First Aid & CPR-C Training (current)
5. **All duty day staff must attend the Training Sessions and Policy Review in September.** Under the Childcare and Early Years Act (CCEYA), all Duty Day Participants must review the school's policies and receive training on the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans for children in the school who have this life-threatening allergy.

Change of Contact Information

Inform the school of **any** changes in your contact information, so that our records are up-to-date. This is not only to ensure the safety of your child but is a requirement of the CCEYA.

Although the Administrative Assistant makes every effort to ensure the above items are complete and up-to-date, any outstanding items or changes are the responsibility of the family.

Sample Weekly Snack & Lunch Menu

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning snack	Triscuits Cucumbers Strawberries	Fish Crackers Broccoli Fresh pineapple	Veggie Thins Vegetable sticks Cantaloupe	Veggie Straws Cauliflower Oranges	Ritz Crackers Peppers Apple
Lunch	Grilled cheese Bean salad Peppers Oranges	Vegetable & bean soup Bagels & cream cheese Carrot sticks Apple	Hard boiled eggs Peas and quinoa Sunshine sauce Raspberries	Curry mince / curry lentils Rice Corn Canned pineapple	French Toast with yogurt & maple syrup Cucumbers Strawberries
Afternoon & aftercare snacks	Wheat Thins Marble cheese Vegetable sticks Cantaloupe	Tortilla chips Hummus Cucumbers Grapes	Raisin bread Yogurt Peppers Clementines	Bagels Cream cheese Broccoli Blueberries	Rice cakes Edamame beans Vegetable sticks Oranges

Snack

Snack is an important part of the program. It is a social occasion and an opportunity for children to develop social, self-help and language skills. Snack is provided in the morning, afternoon and aftercare.

Our nutritious snacks consist of a grain product (cracker, bread, etc.,) vegetable and fruit. In the afternoon and aftercare, we also provide a more calorie dense milk product (cheese, yogurt, etc.) or legume (hummus, chickpeas, etc.). Water is available to drink at all snacks and lunch and provided if needed in between.

Staff & duty day volunteers sit with the children and serve snack according to the child's preferences. Children should be encouraged to taste all the different foods but not forced to eat them. We offer vegetables and fruits before the grain product to encourage a nutritionally balanced snack. When snack is over, the children place their cups and plates in the bin provided.

Special Trips, Activities, Programs

Chartered Bus Trips

We schedule a few chartered bus trips each year to farms, conservation areas, and other places of interest. Children can be accompanied by an adult from your family (parent, adult relative, friend or caregiver).

Bus trips give children an opportunity to get out of the city and are a whole school activity. Family member attendance encourages parent and family connections and helps to strengthen

our community. Some examples of trip destination have been Andrew's Scenic Acres in the fall, Crawford Lake in late winter, and Lynde Shores Conservation Area in the spring. Sign-up sheets will be posted and permission forms are required and trips do require an extra fee.

Public Transit Trips

The children sometimes travel by streetcar, bus, subway or walking to the museum, theatre, pet stores, etc. Teachers may ask for extra parent volunteers to help with these outings. Permission forms will be distributed prior to these trips.

Local Walking Trips

Local walking trips are spontaneous and parents may not be notified. Permission for local excursions is requested at time of enrollment in the registration package.

Hippo Nursery School Policies and Procedures

Both the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (the CCEYA) and Toronto Public Health require Hippo Nursery School to operate with a comprehensive set of policies and procedures.

We have also established our own operating policies and procedures to ensure that the nursery school functions in a professional and transparent manner.

Many of our Policies and Procedures are accessible through in our Google Drive by following this link:

The following policies will be reviewed in detail at the Duty Day Training and Policy Review Session in September.

You will need to sign-off on these policies, indicating that you have reviewed and understood them prior to your first official duty day at the nursery school.

Behaviour Guidance Policy & List of Prohibited Practices

It is noted that all adults who enter the school premises will respect our Behaviour Guidance policy that includes but is not limited to: the use of corporal punishment; and/or deliberate harsh or degrading measures to be used on a child that would humiliate a child or undermine a child's self-respect, will result in immediate dismissal. A full copy of Hippo Nursery School's Behaviour Guidance Policy is located in the member's section of our website and from the office on request.

List of Prohibited Practices

At Hippo Nursery School the following practices are NEVER permitted:

(a) corporal punishment of the child;

(b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;

(c) 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 policies and procedures;

(d) 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;

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

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

(g) sexual abuse, sexual misconduct and prescribed sexual acts (as defined under the *Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*).

Suspected Child Abuse Reporting Policy

Hippo Nursery School has a child abuse policy that states clearly that any abuse or suspected abuse will be reported to the Children's Aid Society immediately.
Please familiarize yourself with the details of this policy listed in the member's section of our web-site. You are also welcome to request a paper copy from the office should you require one.

Program Statement and Implementation Policy

The Hippo Nursery School philosophy is defined by a fundamentally child-centred approach to al l programming and by the active participation of parents and caregivers in that programming.

Hippo Nursery School program will reflect the view that children are competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential

All programs are play-based and the children are central to their own educational process. The children's ideas and interests emerge and form the basis for their experiences, while the environment provides the materials and feedback that support their development. Children are given the freedom to use their imagination, and to develop their creativity and independence, with no pressure to conform or compete.

In addition, the participation of parents is highly valued by Hippo Nursery School and is an integral part of the Nursery School process. Parents are involved in both the classroom and the operation of the school and in partnership with the staff and teachers, enrich the lives of all of the children and have the opportunity to learn from one another.

Structured as a parent/teacher Nursery School, Hippo Nursery School stresses the spirit of cooperation amongst all staff and parents. Parents and staff are all workers and members at Hippo Nursery School who provide early childhood education in our community. Hippo Nursery School also recognizes clear lines of accountability, and is committed to providing an inclusive and safe environment that follows *How Does Learning Happen?*, Ontario's pedagogy for the early years as a guiding document and approach to our daily program and practices.

Ontario Regulation 137/15 S. 46 (3)	Goal	Approach

Promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children	We will promote an inclusive and safe environment that promotes race, ethnicity, physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of the children.	Children's diversity is respected in choices and materials used throughout the program. Children's nutrition is valued through menu choices that reflect the Canada Food Guide. Food choices are respectful of family beliefs and practices. Staff adhere to all food restrictions and allergies and document the children's health. Concerns are brought forward to families immediately.

Ontario Regulation 137/15 S. 46 (3)	Goal	Approach
Support positive and responsible interactions among the children, parents, childcare providers and staff	All children, families, and staff at Hippo Nursery School shall be treated equally, with respect and be given the support and opportunities needed within our environment.	Opportunities are given for staff and families to connect daily and for families to discuss their child's development and program. Duty Day involvement in the classroom provides parents the opportunity to learn and interact with staff and all children.
Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate	Staff will support each child by providing a developmentally appropriate framework for children to communicate in a positive manner and promote self-regulation.	Staff model positive interactions and communication by respecting each child's individuality and by being engaged in children's play. Staff model and encourage children to recognize and verbalize feelings in themselves and in others.
Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry	We will recognize each child's natural desire and ability to learn. Staff will foster children's natural curiosity to explore and be leaders in their learning.	Using observations and documentation, staff will expand on the children's interests and inquiries through both planned and emergent curriculum. Staff facilitate play-based curriculum that encourages children to be curious, take risks, test their limits and lead their own learning. Staff will provide materials and experiences (both indoor and outdoor) that encourage children to explore through open-ended activities, build-on experiences and expand learning opportunities.
Ontario Regulation 137/15 S. 46 (3)	Goal	Approach
Provide child initiated and adult supported experiences	We will recognize each child's natural desire and ability to learn. Staff will foster children's natural curiosity to explore and be leaders in their learning.	Staff will provide materials and experiences (both indoor and outdoor) that encourage children to explore. Staff act as facilitators in the environment. Through observations and documentation teachers will plan group and individual experiences based on children's interests and abilities.

Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported	Staff will engage children by planning experiences that are based on their interests and developmental needs.	Through observations and documentation teachers will plan group and individual experiences based on children's interests, abilities, and needs.
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 child care	A variety of experiences that incorporate all times of the day (indoor, outdoor, active, and quiet) will be planned for and facilitated while ensuring the individual needs of each child are being met.	Staff meet the individual needs of the children by following individual plans, observations, family instructions, and regulations set forward for Hippo Nursery School. Staff plan adaptations for experiences/activities so that all children have an opportunity to be successful and engaged. There are areas in the environment to meet children's varying needs. There are opportunities for children to have quiet and

		reflective time, and areas that allow for play that is more active (both indoor and outdoor).
Ontario Regulation 137/15 S. 46 (3)	Goal	Approach
Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children	Hippo Nursery School will promote a culture of family involvement by engaging families in partnerships with our teachers which supports their children's development and learning.	There are opportunities for staff and families to connect throughout the day and for families to discuss and provide feedback regarding their child's development and program. Parents are required to participate and enrich the program using their various talents and abilities (sharing cultural knowledge, musical abilities, mini performances, etc.)
Involve the local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff	We will engage with various community members and businesses to support our children, families, and staff.	We regularly bring the children on outings to businesses and places within our community (for example to our local vet, hair salon and to visit neighbours). We have a Resource Worker that can assist the children and families needing support and provide resources for families and teachers when needed. We have a Parent Educator who regularly liaises with community members to facilitate programs, workshops, and training sessions that support our families, children, and staff.
Support staff or others who interact with the children at a childcare centre in relation to continuous professional learning	We will support staff to attend professional learning opportunities and encourage ongoing training as related to the childcare field.	Staff attend workshops that are provided throughout the year (internal trainings, external workshops, and performance goal development). Financial support is available for staff development.
Ontario Regulation 137/15 S. 46 (3)	Goal	Approach

Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families	To ensure that the strategies set out in (a) to (j) are meeting the needs of our children and families and provide opportunities to make changes if needed.	Through staff's documentation of the children, and feedback from families and staff, we assess and explore opportunities for improvements in our approaches. Families are surveyed throughout the year using online formal surveys or hard copies (depending on need). We provide our families with Duty Day training and a Duty Day review. We have an open door policy with our families and we have a Parent Rep. on our Board of Directors which is composed of parent volunteers.

Sleep Supervision Policy

All children who sleep while at Hippo Nursery School are to be supervised during sleep. Staff must always be aware of a child's physical health during sleep by performing direct visual checks of each child.

Parents are consulted respecting their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrollment and ongoing thereafter.

Hippo Nursery School will follow all recommendations for sleep that are made by Public Health Agency of Canada and will ensure that cots comply with the standards of the Canadian Consumer Products Safety Act.

Sleep Room/Area Setup

Children will be assigned to individual cots or mats which will be labelled with the child's name.

Lights can be dimmed in the sleep room/area, but staff must be able to see children clearly during the visual checks.

There will be a sleep plan posted in each room to quickly identify where each child's cot or mat is located in the sleep room/area.

Procedure for Sleep Supervision

Staff must perform direct visual checks of sleeping toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarten age children every 30 minutes. Direct visual checks mean that staff will be physically present by each child, checking for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours, such as, but not limited to:

Laboured breathing

Bluish color around the lips or fingernails

Color of the skin (may look grey)

Sweating

Wheezing – whistling sound while breathing

Restlessness

Direct visual checks must be documented on the Sleep Room Visual Check Chart.

Any changes in a child's sleeping patterns or behaviours during sleep will be communicated to parents and will result in more frequent direct visual supervision of the child.

Toddlers and Preschool Rest/Sleep Period

Toddler and Preschool children are required to have a rest period not exceeding two hours in length, or must be engaged in quiet activities, based on the child's needs.

Although there may be reduced ratios in the sleep room/area, toddler and preschool children must be visually supervised at all times.

Every 30 minutes, staff must stand beside each child and check for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours in each child.

Direct visual checks for toddler and preschool children must be documented on the Sleep Room Visual Check Chart

The Sleep Supervision Policy will be reviewed with staff, students and volunteers when they begin their employment or involvement with Hippo Nursery School and at any other time when changes are made.

Serious Occurrence Policy And Procedure

Application
This Policy applies to any full-time, part-time teaching staff, assistants, support staff and Duty Day staff

Purpose
Hippo Nursery School aims to deliver a program that promotes the health, safety and well-being of all children and staff in our school. We have established processes to ensure our program is accountable to the families and the Ministry of Education, and is consistent with relevant legislation and recognized professional practice.

Intent
To support the health, safety and well-being of children and staff in licensed child care monitored by the *Child Care Licensing System* (CCLS). The Serious Occurrence Policy provides a plan to deal with any serious incidents, a protocol to report, track and follow up on incidents, and provide greater transparency for parents regarding serious occurrences that occur in the child care program.

Definition of a Serious Occurrence
The Definition of a "serious occurrence" according to the *Child Care and Early Years Act 2014* is as follows:

(a) the death of a child who received child care at a child care centre, whether it occurs on or off the premises,
(b) abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre,
(c) a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre,
(d) an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised, or
(e) an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre.

Responding to a Serious Occurrence

Should a Serious Occurrence arise, there are a few key components to remember when responding.

All serious occurrences must be reported to the Supervisor or designate immediately so that s/he can conduct a *preliminary inquiry* and all persons having knowledge of the occurrence should remain on the premises until they have been interviewed by the Supervisor or designated person.

If the preliminary inquiry is conducted by a designated person, the Supervisor is to be immediately notified. The preliminary report must be written and signed by the Supervisor

or designated person before s/he leaves the premises. This information will also be entered into the CCLS.

. The report should include the following:

- Description of the occurrence
- Client allegation (if applicable)
- Date, time, place of occurrence
- Reporting time
- Reason for occurrence, if known
- People involved
- Action taken
- Current status
- Parties notified
- Further action recommended

Each **type** of Serious Occurrence (according to the definition) has its own procedure to follow, listed below.

Procedures:

(a) the death of a child:

- If a child dies while in the care of centre staff, staff are to immediately call 911, provide emergency personnel access to the child and follow all instructions given.
- Staff will inform the Supervisor/Designate.
- Supervisor/Designate will call the child's parent(s).
- If staff are informed of the death of a child at anytime, notify the School Supervisor immediately.

(b) abuse, neglect or an allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving child care at a child care centre

- Staff **must make the report directly to Children's Aid Society** and /or police. They must not rely on anyone else to report on his or her behalf.
- Staff are to follow the school Suspected Child Abuse policy.

(c) a life-threatening injury to or a life-threatening illness of a child who receives child care at a child care centre

- If the child is experiencing Anaphylaxis, follow that child's individual **Anaphylaxis Action Plan.**
- Staff are to immediately call 911.
- Staff are to perform First Aid on the child while waiting for emergency personnel.
- Staff are to provide emergency personnel access to the child.
- Staff are to contact the parents of the child and inform them of what happened.

(d) an incident where a child who is receiving child care at a child care centre goes missing or is temporarily unsupervised

Missing child:

- Alert all staff.
- Immediately search for the child on the premises, including playground.

- A staff member who is not searching the premises is to immediately alert the child's parents and advise the police by telephone if the child has not been immediately found.

Child temporarily unsupervised:

- Inform the Supervisor, s/he will determine the next step(s).

(e) an unplanned disruption of the normal operations of a child care centre that poses a risk to the health, safety or well-being of children receiving child care at the child care centre

- Follow Hippo School's emergency and evacuation procedures.
- Call parents and inform them of the situation and the next steps, which may include picking up their children.

Reporting a Serious Occurrence

Staff, students and volunteers are required to report any incident that may be deemed a Serious Occurrence, as defined in this Policy, and must immediately report the incident to the School Supervisor or Designate.

The School Supervisor or Designate will report the serious occurrence to the Ministry of Education through CCLS **within 24 hours** of becoming aware of the occurrence.

If CCLS cannot be accessed, the Supervisor/Designate must still notify the Program Advisor via telephone or email within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence and complete a Serious Occurrence report in CCLS as soon as the system becomes available.

The serious occurrence categories in CCLS are as follows:

1. Death of a Child
2. Allegation of Abuse and/or Neglect
3. Life-threatening Injury or Illness
    a. Injury
    b. Illness
4. Missing or Unsupervised Child(ren)
    a. Child was found
    b. Child is still missing
5. Unplanned Disruption of Normal Operations
    a. Fire
    b. Flood
    c. Gas Leak
    d. Detection of Carbon Monoxide
    e. Outbreak
    f. Lockdown
    g. Other Emergency Relocation or Temporary Closure

Updates to Serious Occurrences must be entered in the CCLS within seven working days of the initial report or as required by the Program Advisor. An updated *Serious Occurrence Notification* will be posted at the School.

Serious Occurrence Notification Form

Child Care centres are required to complete and post a summary of each serious occurrence in a place that is visible and accessible to parents within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence for a minimum of 10 business days, **including any allegation of abuse or neglect.**

Serious Occurrence Annual Analysis

A *Serious Occurrence Annual Summary and Analysis Report* will be completed for all Serious Occurrences that occurred in the previous calendar year. The report is used as a method of identifying issues, trends and actions taken. The Annual Analysis and record of actions taken in response to the analysis are kept on file at Hippo School.

Anaphylactic Policy and Procedure

What is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that can be life threatening. Food is the most common cause of anaphylaxis, but insect stings, medicine, latex, chemicals and exercise can also cause a reaction.

Purpose of the Policy and Procedure

Hippo Nursery School is committed to ensuring that that we take a pro-active position regarding the prevention of anaphylaxis. The following procedure outlines our process for dealing with anaphylaxis at the nursery school.

Strategies to Reduce the Risk of Exposure

- Signage will be posted throughout the interior of the school in areas where children could potentially be exposed to their particular allergen.
- Our parent handbook and our website contain information about what foods, ingredients or items must not be brought into the school.
- Parents, children and staff are asked to wash their hands and faces if foods containing allergens have been consumed prior to arriving at the nursery school.
- Families of children with extreme allergies (for which the school cannot accommodate) will be asked to provide their own food from home and must be kept in a labeled container.
- Food with any label that states “May Contain” nut warnings will not be served
- A list of all allergies and ingredients that are not permitted will be provided to parents and staff.
- All labels of food served at the school will be read by a staff member prior to food prep.
- Food ingredient labels must be read each time it is purchased by staff or families.
- Only food prepared at the nursery school or with ingredient labels will be served to the children, i.e. no home baking for birthday parties or events during regular program hours
- Pot-luck food will not be served on the school premises, during regular program hours
- People and groups using the school outside regular program hours will be instructed to clean and sanitize where food has been prepared and served (i.e. St. Matthew’s United Church Sunday school, Suzuki music program, etc.)
- Children and adults will be instructed not to share food

- All surfaces will be sanitized prior to and after preparing and serving food.
- All cleaning supplies and other products containing allergens will be stored out of reach of children.
- All medicine will be kept in a locked container and will be closely supervised when being administered. The only exception to this is the EpiPens.
- Playground areas at the school and during off-site trips will be monitored for potential allergens such as wasps, peanuts, tree nuts, candy wrappers etc.
- All parent(s) or physician of a child with life-threatening allergies will train the Supervisor and Staff of the nursery school (see anaphylaxis training section of this policy for more details), prior to the child starting at the school.

****Hippo Nursery School will always be a nut sensitive school even if, in any particular year, we do not have a child with a nut allergy. However, we occasionally have children with other food or product allergies that will be handled, following our procedure, only when they exist in the school, i.e. fish, kiwi, eggs, dairy, latex, etc.**

Communication Plan for the Dissemination of Information

- Parents of children with anaphylaxis will provide an Individual Plan for their child prior to enrollment and will train all adults at the nursery school.
  (Please see training section of this policy for more details), prior to the child starting at the school.
- Staff will review Individual Plans as well as Emergency Procedures on a regular basis such as at staff meetings.
- A list of all allergies, ingredients to be avoided, strategies to reduce the risk of exposure will be reviewed at the duty day staff training sessions and duty day review sessions throughout the year.
- Staff will remind duty day staff to review allergy lists prior to serving food to children
- Parents/Caregivers and staff will be informed of all allergies at the nursery school through signage and email as well as on our website

Individual Plan and Emergency Procedures

Prior to enrollment, the parent/guardian will meet with the Program Supervisor to provide input for the child's Individual Plan and emergency procedure. This plan will include but is not limited to:

- Child's name
- Description of allergy(s)
- Monitoring and avoidance strategies
- Signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction
- Child care staff roles and responsibilities
- Parent/guardian consent for administering allergy medication, sharing information and posting the photo and emergency plan
- Emergency contact information
- Location of EpiPen and back up EpiPen (One is kept in a central location in the office and the other is kept in a fanny pack worn by the child's teacher when the child is present in the program)
- Photograph of the child will be provided by the parents

Copies of Individual Plans are kept in each child's file, emergency bags, trip bags, as well as in the Health Policy and Procedure section of our Policy Binder and/or in the health file on the computer.

The Individual Plan will also be posted in all areas of the nursery school where food is prepared and served.

Anaphylaxis Training

- **ALL ADULTS WORKING OR VOLUNTEERING AT THE NURSERY SCHOOL:** Before a child with a life threatening allergy starts at the school, their parent or physician will train the adults at the duty day training/policy review and sign off meetings in early September. If a staff or family joins after the initial session, the supervisor will conduct the training/review.
- Training will include a review of each child's emergency plan, procedures to be followed in the event of a child having an anaphylactic reaction, recognizing the signs and symptoms and administering medication.
- All adults working or volunteering at the nursery school will sign-off that they have been trained.
- In addition, all adults will be given an opportunity to use the demonstrator Epi-pen and ask questions relating to anaphylaxis during the training session with the parents or physician.
- In a child's second year at the nursery school, if there are no changes to their individual emergency plan, then the Supervisor who has previously been trained may train all the adults working or volunteering at the nursery school.
- If there are changes to the plan then the parents or physician must train the adults.

Parents/guardians are requested to advise the Program Supervisor if their child develops an allergy, requires medication and/or of any change to the child's individual plan or treatment. Individual Plans will be reviewed and revised as necessary as directed by the parent or the physician.

- **Duty day staff (unless parent of the child), support staff, volunteers and student teachers are not permitted to administer medications unless under extreme circumstances (i.e. all staff members are incapacitated**).

Emergency Protocol

- Person A stays with the child at all times
- Person B gets and administers Epipen as per child's Individual Plan (first sign of reaction)
- Person C calls 911 to have the child transported to hospital even if symptoms have subsided
- Person C also contacts parent/guardian or emergency contact person and arranges for them to meet their child and Hippo Nursery School staff at the hospital
- Administered EpiPen is to accompany child to hospital and given to parent for disposal
- Serious Occurrence Report to be made

Playground Safety Policy

Playground Policy- Programming
At Hippo Nursery School, the R.E.C.E. staff provides opportunities for all children that promote creative and constructive play. Outdoor programs must take into consideration the developmental levels and needs of the children and provide year round active, social and quiet play.

Playground Policy- Supervision
At Hippo Nursery School, the outdoor program is an extension of the indoor program. Ratios are maintained accordingly (Toddlers 5:1, Preschool 8:1) and require an RECE to be present whenever children are on the playground. It is important for staff to interact with children while on the playground. Staff are to be involved with the children, providing an inclusive environment, facilitating and extending play while ensuring safe supervision of the children at all times.

Playground Policy- Renovations/Repairs
At Hippo Nursery School, any new equipment or new renovations, repairs or replacements will be installed to meet the CSA Standard.
A Certified Playground Safety Inspector will inspect all work and verify compliance with the CSA Standard in writing. The document will be kept on file.

Playground Policy- Playground Safety Log
Hippo Nursery School has developed a Playground Safety Log: this includes playground injury reports, daily inspections, monthly inspections, seasonal inspections, annual inspections and action plans related to the findings of the inspections. Staff will be responsible for keeping this log up-to-date.

Playground Policy- Review
At Hippo Nursery School, all staff must review the Playground Safety Policy prior to commencing employment and annually thereafter. A written record of the review must be signed by the staff as well as the by the supervisor or alternate person who conducted the review and kept on file for at least two years from the date the review was completed and signed.

Playground Weather Policy

At Hippo Nursery School we are committed to outdoor play as per the requirement for each child in attendance for 6 or more hours per day, to play outside.

Teachers will use their discretion / judgment. If the decision is made to go outside there is an understanding that the teacher can decide to come back inside if the weather conditions are determined to limit playground activities.

Parent will be asked to supply their child(ren) with appropriate clothing for the weather conditions so that there is always an option to take them outside.

If parents do not want their child to go outside, then they need to request it in writing and be available to come and supervise their child during the outdoor play time.

Supervision of Volunteers and Students Policy

The purpose of this policy is to support the safety and well-being of children at Hippo Nursery School by clarifying the roles of volunteers and placement students with respect to the supervision of children in the program. The term "volunteer" includes duty day staff members that have not yet received a satisfactory response from their Police Reference and Vulnerable Sector check. "Placement students" are students placed in the Hippo Nursery School child care program by an educational institution. At Hippo Nursery School, volunteers and students play a critical role in the services provided to children and their families. HNS actively promotes volunteerism and student placements and empowers volunteers and students to support the development and well-being of children and families.

Procedure

Orientation

All students and volunteers must attend a general orientation prior to commencement of their placement. During their orientation, all required documents including immunization, Standard First aid & CPR-C, and Police Reference & Vulnerable Sector checks must be submitted. Hippo Nursery School is required to retain a copy of such documents. Relevant policies and procedures are reviewed and signed off by each student and volunteer. A signed acknowledgement of receipt is required. No student/volunteer may commence an assignment at Hippo Nursery School until the orientation has been completed. Volunteers whose agreements are for one year or more are required to review and sign off on all relevant policies and procedures annually.

For duty day staff members

In general, Duty Day staff members are not considered volunteers, they are considered as staff for the purpose of maintaining ratio. However, they are considered volunteers until they receive a satisfactory response from their Police Reference and Vulnerable Sector Check.

There are two mandatory Duty Day training sessions per school year which are conducted by the supervisor and ECE staff. The first session will take place at the beginning of the school year, prior to the first official duty days and the second session takes place in February. Duty day training is mandatory for all duty day staff members including returning duty day staff and includes a review of all Hippo Nursery School policies and procedures. Policies covered in the annual duty day training in September include and are not limited to: Emergency and Evacuation Procedures, Sanitary Practices Procedures, Sleep Supervision Policy, Policy for monitoring Compliance and Contraventions with Policies and Procedures and Emergency Plans, Serious Occurrence Policy, Medication Policy, Program Statement and Implementation Policy, Playground Safety Policy, Anaphylaxis Policy, Supervision of Volunteers & Students Policy, and Police Reference & Vulnerable Sector Check Policy.

Role of the Supervisor

The Supervisor will:

- Conduct the orientation for volunteers and students
- Provide site specific emergency information about fire exits, emergency and evacuation procedures, location of emergency bags
- Provide site specific location of Allergy and Food Restriction Lists
- Review each child's Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan of Care, each child's Individual Plan of Care for Health Conditions and each child's Individualized Plan of Care, as appropriate, and ensure that a Training Record is signed for each
- Ensure that all documentation is completed, as required
- Designate a staff to supervise the student or volunteer and review the role and responsibility of the supervising staff
- Monitor for Compliance and Contravention of Policies and Procedures and Individualized Plans for each volunteer
- Review, on an annual basis, all key policies and procedures with each volunteer.

Role of the Teaching Staff

The Teaching Staff will:

- Introduce student/volunteer to staff, parents and children
- Assign a safe place for personal belongings
- Provide mentoring, feedback, guidance and support on an ongoing basis
- Intervene when required
- Ensure that students/volunteers are never left unsupervised with children
- Immediately address non-compliance with behavioural guidance policies
- Monitor for Compliance and Contravention of Policies and Procedures and Individualized Plans for each student

Supervision and mentoring of Volunteers and Placement Students

- Volunteers and placement students are supervised by teaching staff and by the school supervisor.
- Placement students are each assigned to a specific teacher who is responsible for supervising and mentoring them. Addressing non-compliance forthwith, as outlined in our policies by the supervisor.
- All Duty Day Staff, Volunteers and Placement Students will be observed and documented as per our Monitoring for Compliance and Contravention Policy. Duty Day Staff and Volunteers in January, and annually thereafter. Placement Students, half way through their placement with us.

Supervision of Students

The teaching staff will review tasks/assignments with the student. The teaching staff review the student's placement evaluation before providing it to the student. Each student will meet with the teaching staff and off-site placement supervisor to review the student's placement evaluation.

Supervision of Volunteers

The Supervisor will review the role of the volunteer and of the teaching staff, as well as, attendance and expectations for the volunteer while participating in the program. Regular feedback will be provided through Monitoring for Compliance and Contravention of Policies and Procedures and Individualized Plans.

At the end of the volunteer term, and upon request, a final written summary report, indicating duration of volunteer period and assigned duties, will be provided to the volunteer.

Safety Procedures for Students and Volunteers

To ensure the safety and protection of our children, staff, students and volunteers:

1. Students and volunteers must be supervised by a staff at all times. At no time, and under no circumstance, shall a student or volunteer be left unsupervised with children.
2. Each student/volunteer must agree to adhere to the HNS policies and procedures.
3. Students and volunteers are not to be included in the staff complement, and are not to be counted as part of the staff to child ratios.
4. Students and volunteers are not permitted to administer medication.

Participation in Program

1. Review your daily schedule for your responsibilities upon arrival and throughout the day.
2. Follow the weekly program plan.
3. Report all accidents to the RECE/ECA in the room, regardless of how minor (bump, scrape, fall, etc.).
4. If parents/guardians have any concerns or questions, please refer them to the staff in the room.
5. If you have any questions specific to your classroom assignment, please speak to your supervising staff or to the Supervisor.

General Conduct

1. No portable electronics can be carried while in the classroom.
2. Only emergency calls are permitted to be made or received while in the program.
3. No outside food is to be eaten in the classroom.
4. Actively engage with the children in the classroom and on the playground.

Reporting Absences

The Supervisor must be informed by telephone, text, or email about illness or absence prior to the time scheduled to report on site. For Students, all absences will be documented on the college/university issued attendance form. For Volunteers, repeated absences and cancellations without just cause may result in termination as a volunteer with HNS.

Volunteers/Students Responsibilities

1. Report to the main office to the Supervisor or staff in-charge on your first day, introduce yourself and provide him/her with the package of documentation you received at orientation.
2. Report to your designated room.
3. Take direction, as appropriate, from staff who you are working with.
4. Provide a biography/introduction letter and picture of yourself to your supervising staff to be posted in the room for parents.
5. Students - Ensure that all program manuals/evaluations that are provided by the college or university are passed onto the supervising staff in the room.
6. Students – document attendance in hours.

Expectations of Volunteers and Placement Students

- Review all policies and follow them
- Attend all required training

- Request assistance from teaching staff and supervisor as required
- Follow the direction of teaching staff and supervisor at all times

Note: Any volunteer/student who report to the school wearing clothing or footwear that is deemed to be inappropriate will be asked to go home and change.

Health Policy

DOCUMENTATION

In accordance with Toronto Public Health regulations the following must be returned to the school before a child can attend:

- Evidence of immunization against all diseases as per the Immunization Schedule. Some families may choose to opt-out of immunization, in this case they must provide either a medical exemption from their physician or else a signed & notarized Affidavit (Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief – Child). **Please remember to inform the school when your child receives new vaccinations** so that we can keep our records up-to-date.
- An Adult Health Form filled out by a physician that includes immunization history and a recent skin test and/or chest x-ray that indicates freedom from tuberculosis, for the parent or others who will be doing duty days. Again, should adults choose to opt-out of immunization, they must provide either a medical exemption from their physician or else a signed & notarized Affidavit (Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief – Individual).

  The above health forms must be completed and returned to the school or the child will not be allowed to start.

ILLNESS PROCEDURES

Please do not send your child to school with a cold, flu, or if they have a fever, diarrhea or have been vomiting. It is of vital importance that we observe this rule, as contagious illnesses can spread rapidly.

We cannot accept sick children at school, no matter what the circumstances. Children who become sick during the course of the day will be isolated in the office. The parent must make immediate provision for a sick child to be picked up. All children must be analgesic-free in order to **safely** attend Hippo Nursery School.

Colds - At the first sign of a cold, please keep your child at home. Common signs can include: lethargy, glassy eyes, runny nose, and irritability. Recovery will be quicker if children are kept at home through the third day. If at that time there is no fever, sore throat, or coughing, the child may return to school, in spite of still having some residual sniffles. If the illness is only a cold, the infectious period will be over in 3 days. Please do not ask us to keep your child inside. If children are not well enough to fully participate in the program, then they are not well enough to attend.

You must contact the school daily when your child is absent due to illness. You must provide us with **details** (start date and time of symptoms) in order for us to track all illnesses so that we can put policies in place to minimize the spread of disease.

Medicine: Only the Supervisor or a designated staff can administer medication. Parents must sign a consent form before medicine is administered.

Policy - Any child, parent, or staff who is sick will be excluded from the school using the following criteria:

1) Those experiencing **fever, diarrhea, or vomiting** need to be excluded for **24 hours** after the last symptom has disappeared, before returning to participate in the program. In the event of an outbreak, the exclusion period will be **48 hours** after the last symptom has disappeared.
2) If the illness prevents a child or adult from participating in the program.
3) If the illness is an **infectious disease** i.e. impetigo, ringworm, hepatitis A, strep throat, pink eye.

Children will be excluded for the full period of time required by the Toronto Public Health, using their GUIDELINES FOR COMMON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

The school keeps a record of communicable diseases for the Toronto Public Health. If an outbreak does occur, we must give the Toronto Public Health the following information: child's name, parent's name, address, telephone numbers, communicable disease in question, date of onset of disease, doctor's name and telephone number. You may be asked for consent to submit a stool sample for testing should someone in your family experience outbreak symptoms.

Waitlist Policy and Procedure

A new waiting list is maintained by the Registrar, starting each October for the following September's registration.

As we often have an overflow of response from the community at waitlist times, waitlist forms are available online and accepted no earlier than the specified/designated date. Notice of the date when our waitlist opens is given well in advance on our website.

Waitlist forms are timestamped when they are received and then numbered accordingly.

An Information Session and/or tours are organized by the registrar for those families on the waiting list. The waiting list is not carried over from year to year, families must reapply each year and there is no cost to sign up for the waitlist.

Spaces are offered in sequence beginning with Internal families, then alumni, followed by new families.

Factors that are considered before offering a spot are: age of child, maximum group size, type of use needed (full-time, part-time, etc.).

All waitlist families **will be contacted** by the registrar even if we are not able to offer them a spot for the coming year. **A family's position on the waitlist does not necessarily reflect their chances of getting a spot at the school**. We ask that families please refrain from contacting the school or registrar with questions about their position on the waitlist as we WILL contact them.

Waitlist families will be contacted when the internal registration is complete. We anticipate beginning external registration **at the end of January or early February**. It is the family's responsibility to ensure we have been given the right contact information. If a family is offered a spot, they will have two days to accept or decline the spot and then the registrar will move on to the next family. If we are able to offer a family a spot they can expect to hear by the end of March. If a family is not offered a space in this initial period, it is possible that a space may become available if a family withdraws their registration prior to their child's start date or withdraws from the school.

Emergency Management Policy and Procedures

Hippo Nursery School has developed detailed Emergency Management policies and procedures for many different situations. If we have an Emergency we will follow the procedures outlined and inform the parents as soon as possible. The full policy is available on our website.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

Teacher: The R.E.C.E. directly in charge of the group.

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Policy

General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our school and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the Teachers and School Supervisor and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 3 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the school supervisor and/or licensee.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit
http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx

Procedures

<table>
<tr><th>Nature of Issue or Concern</th><th>Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:</th><th>Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:</th></tr>
<tr><td>Program Room-Related

E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

- the classroom teacher directly

or

- the supervisor or licensee.</td><td rowspan="4">- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised

or

- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 3 business days.

Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:

- the date and time the issue/concern was received;

- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;

- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;

- the details of the issue/concern; and

- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.

Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.

Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 3 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.

Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</td></tr>
<tr><td>General, Centre- or Operations-Related

E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

- the supervisor or licensee.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

- the individual directly

or
- the supervisor or licensee.

All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Student- / Volunteer-Related</td><td>Raise the issue or concern to

- the teacher responsible for supervising the volunteer or student</td></tr>
</table>

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
	or - the supervisor and/or licensee. All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the school supervisor.

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

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

Contacts:

HNS School Supervisor: 416-651-6718 or supervisor@hipposchool.org

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

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures

Name of Child Care Centre: Hippo Nursery School (HNS)

Updated Policy and Procedures: December 22, 2023

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care at Hippo Nursery School (HNS).

This policy will provide staff, duty-day parents, students, and volunteers of Hippo Nursery School with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care. This includes what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at HNS as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

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

Note: definitions for terms used throughout this policy are provided in a Glossary at the end of the document.

Policy

General

Hippo Nursery School takes the safety of children attending our program very seriously. HNS educators will work collaboratively with families to ensure that any child receiving care at the centre is only released to the child's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has designated through written consent provided to the child care centre.

HNS will only dismiss children into the care of an authorized adult. HNS will ensure that systems are in place and followed in order to ensure that all children are in a safe place at all times. In response to the recent public service announcements regarding children being left in a locked car, during the summer months, a safe arrival strategy has been developed to ensure that this accident does not occur. Strong communication between HNS and parents/guardians are required to assure the holistic safety of each child.

Parents/guardians are responsible for communicating any planned student absences, lateness, or change in safe departure plans to the school on a timely basis and for providing the school with complete and current emergency information to enable the school to make any necessary follow-up contacts.

We request that parents/guardian inform the centre in the event of their child will be absent by calling the centre or sending messages via email or Lillio.

Procedures

Accepting a child into care

When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off the program staff must do the following**:**

- Greet the parent/guardian and child.

- Ask how the child's evening/morning has been and if there any changes to the child's pickup procedures (i.e., anyone other than the parent/guardian picking up). If someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up the child, the staff member must confirm that the person is listed on the emergency authorized list. If not, ask the parent to provide in writing a note or an email with the name of the person picking up the child. The authorized person must present a photo ID when picking up the child for the first time.
- Document the change in pick-up in the daily log.
- Sign the child in the attendance record.

When a child has not arrived in care as expected

If a child has not arrived in care as expected and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off, left a message of any kind, or advised the closing staff, the program staff in the classroom must do the following:

- Inform the supervisor or designate that they should start contacting the child's parents/guardian by 10:00 a.m. The parent/guardian will be contacted using the contact numbers listed on the child's registration form (previously supplied by the parent/guardian). If unable to speak to someone, a message will be left for the parent/guardian.
- If there is no response in twenty minutes from either the parent or guardian, the supervisor will continue to contact the parent/guardian while contacting all emergency/authorized numbers in the child's file.
- If no confirmation of the absence has been received by 11:00 a.m., the police will be contacted.

Once the child's absence has been confirmed, the program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information in the daily log.

Releasing a child from care

The staff member who is supervising the child at the time of pickup shall only release the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has designated through written consent provided to the child care centre. When the staff member 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 or authorized individual.
- When the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian or authorized individual for photo ID and confirm the individual's information against the parent/guardian or authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

When a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

- If a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up by 5:25pm the RECE shall contact the parent/guardian by phone call and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.

- If the staff member is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must check for the authorized individuals listed on the child's emergency chart. If the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff member shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pickup as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
- If the staff member has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff member shall contact emergency contacts, then refer to procedures under " where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed."

When a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

- In the event that a parent/guardian or authorized individual should have picked up a child from care and has not arrived by 5:30 p.m., program staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pickup.
- One staff member shall stay with the child, while the second staff member proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise them that the child is still in care and ask about their expected time of arrival for pickup. When the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed with the authorized individual responsible for pickup if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
- If after twenty minutes the staff member is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff member shall contact the authorized individuals listed on the child's file and notify the supervisor or designate. If an alternate person is available to pick up, staff will check photo ID before releasing the child. The parent will be informed by a message on Lillio, email, or text message.
- When the staff member is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., emergency contacts) by 7:00 p.m., the staff member shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 416-924-4646. The staff member shall follow the CAS directions concerning the next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

<u>Custody situations</u>

When parents are separated or divorced, HNS cannot follow a parent's request to NOT release a child to the other parent without a court order that states the other parent cannot see the child. A court order may also indicate the days/times the parent can see the child.

If a parent asks program staff not to release a child to the other parent but does not have a court order indicating this, the program staff must do the following:

- Tell the parent that you cannot stop the other parent from picking up their child, unless you see a court order that provides confirmation.

- If the parent is still concerned that the other parent may pick up the child, ask that the child not remain in care until the situation is sorted.
- If the parent informs you that they have reason to believe that the child is being abused by the other parent, call Children's Aid Society immediately.

If you are given documentation of a court order confirming the days each parent has the child, a written note must be provided to the program staff ahead of time with clear direction on who is responsible for the pickup the child. If a parent would like to switch days, a written note with information of the changes must be provided to the program staff. If a parent comes to pick up a child on a different day other than indicated on the court order, the program staff must follow these steps:

- Inform the parent who is picking up the child that you must get confirmation from the other parent before releasing the child.
- Call and get permission from a parent who should be picking up that day. Acceptable permission can be given via text message, email, voicemail, or Lillio from the parent agreeing to switch days. The program staff WILL NOT release the child until acceptable permission has been obtained.
- If the parent is displaying aggressive behaviour and insists on taking the child without permission, call the police or 911. Inform the supervisor or designate as soon as the parent begins to get upset.
- If you have information that the person picking up the child is not allowed to be near the child due to a restraining order, a condition of bail, or a probation order, call the police immediately when the person arrives at the centre. You must not allow the person to visit a child if you know that there is a court order, even if the parent says it's OK.

Glossary

Individual authorized to pick up/authorized individual: a person that the parent/guardian has advised the child care program staff in writing can pick up their child from care.

Licensee: The individual or corporation named on the licence issued by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of the child care centre and home child agency.

Parent/guardian: A person having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Parent Participation - Duty Days

Your bi-weekly duty days are a fundamental part of the school experience, allowing us to deliver an excellent child-adult ratio for maximum enrichment of the children.

Bi-Weekly Duty Day Commitment

- Each participating family must do a bi-weekly morning 'duty day' at the nursery school, from 8:45am - 11:45am
- Beginning in September 2022, duty day volunteers are no longer considered staff (part of our licensed adult/child ratio). However, our teachers and assistant rely on you and it is imperative that you arrive on time and stay until the end of your scheduled shift. If you are unable to make your shift, you must find a replacement of pay the missed duty day fee.
- A duty day staff is always assigned to their child's group.

Parental Leave

Hippo Nursery School allows for a one-month duty day leave (2 duty days) for families expecting a baby during the school year program. Please arrange this with the administrative assistant. Parental leave is only from the bi-weekly duty days. Families must fulfill other family membership responsibilities including parent job and general meetings.

Participate Joyfully in your Duty Day

On duty days, parents and caregivers serve as assistant staff. Duty day staff contribute their time, experience, skills, support and encouragement to the children. This involves preparation, awareness and positive thinking. The quality of our program depends on the wholehearted, active participation of those on their duty days.

Commit yourself enthusiastically and joyfully to the program. Make a conscious effort to leave behind the cares and concerns of work and home so you can make a positive contribution. You will enjoy yourself and the children's fun and learning at school can be a welcome break from the stresses of the adult world.

Weather Appropriate Clothing

You will enjoy your duty day much more if you are prepared do get down and dirty and participate in all weather, whether cold, wet, or warm.

Duty Day Responsibilities

- Please refer to the duty day staff handbook which will be given to you during the duty day staff training session/policy review.
- Duty day volunteers/staff assist in supervising the children.
- Be attentive to the children's needs. Interact in their play. Encourage, comment, ask open-ended questions (a question that cannot be answered with a yes or no), and describe what you see. In order to be at a child's eye level, sit at the craft table, sit with the children during their snack and sit when playing or reading to them. If a child is wandering and restless, introduce him/her to an activity to help them settle into the playtime.
- Ensure that children are playing safely and within limits: walking inside the school; wearing shoes at all times; that children are gentle with themselves and others; "using their words" etc.

- To help the children settle into the activities better, adults should remain calm and engaged.
- Encourage the children to tidy up before starting another activity.

Children's Washroom/Diapering

Duty day volunteers/staff are required to help children with washroom routines.

Assist children in using the washroom as needed but encourage independence.

- Encourage children to dress themselves but assist when necessary.
- Guide and assist children in washing their hands before snack, after messy creative play, after using the washroom, etc.
- Please model appropriate hand washing and guide children to use the same procedure. (Instructions posted in washroom)

Parental Leave for Duty Days

Families are granted one month's leave (2 duty days) from their duty days when a sibling is born during the school year. Although we have historically been able to allow younger siblings to accompany parents on their duty days, we can no longer accommodate them as part of the program.

Other Parental Involvement

Parent Jobs

Hippo Nursery School is run by the parents and staff. Parent jobs are an integral part of the Hippo experience. It is very important that each family fulfill their parent job duties as the smooth running of the school depends on everyone working together.

In addition to a bi-weekly duty day, each family takes on a specific area of responsibility for the year—a parent job. Expect to spend an average of 40 hours throughout the year on your parent job. Parent jobs range from a position on the Board of Directors to doing the laundry or filing children's art.

In the summer before the school year starts, families are provided with a list of parent job descriptions and submit a parent job selection form in which jobs are ranked by preference. The jobs are then assigned according to the noted preferences. Every effort is made to assign parents one of their top 3 ranked jobs. Job assignments are communicated to parents in the welcome package emailed in the summer.

Board of Directors

Hippo School is governed by an elected Board of Directors. Elections for open positions are held each May at the Spring Annual General Meeting.

Positions are as follows:

Co-Chairs (2)	Human Resources Chair
Treasurer	Health, Safety & Maintenance Chair
Secretary	Fundraising/Special Events Chair
Parent Job Co-ordinator	

Parents are welcome to attend executive meetings. The meeting dates will be posted in our weekly email Calendar of Events and the school calendar. Please let one of the co-chairs know if you plan to attend.

Meetings

There are two general meetings (one in the fall and one in the spring).

All family members and caregivers doing duty days, must attend a duty day staff training session and policy review prior to beginning duty days and each year they participate. Duty day participants who are not able to attend the training must arrange a time to complete the training with the Supervisor. Failure to attend will impact your eligibility to participate in Duty Days.

Parent Education Workshops

Each year we try to offer a variety of topics and times to meet the needs of as many families as possible. We encourage you to attend the various parent education workshops held throughout the year.

Work Days

Work days are scheduled four times during the school term, usually in October, January, April and June. Parents perform deep cleaning, maintenance, painting, and light repairs to the school facilities and equipment on these work days. Refreshments are supplied. We encourage one parent per family to volunteer for two workday shifts of 3 hours each year their child is enrolled in the school. Not only do the work days provide necessary maintenance and cleaning, they are also a way to get to know other parents in the school and create a sense of ownership and community.

Hippo Holiday Café & Raffle

Family participation in our yearly Hippo Holiday Café and Raffle allows us to continue to offer event for current, prospective and alumni families, neighbours and passersby. In addition to offering fantastic homemade meals and family entertainment, this event showcases the community aspect of the school and raises money that goes towards our operating budget.

Special Activities

All families are encouraged to participate in our special events such as the Halloween parade, Festival of Lights celebration, Lunar New Year celebration and Spring School Picnic.

Membership Agreement

Hippo Nursery School provides a unique experience for both Parents/Caregivers and their children in that Parents/Caregivers are afforded the opportunity to play a large role in their child's nursery school experience. In order to provide this experience, the school encourages a great amount of participation from each member family. By participating, each member family has a voice in their child's education and creates close connections within the Hippo community.

All families agree to the following:

- to submit **a completed registration package** including **all documentation** required by the Ministry of Education for **children** and **Duty Day Staff**. If the required documentation is not received by the school in a timely manner, I/we understand that due to Ministry of Education licensing requirements, my/our child will be unable to attend the program and/or the duty day staff from our family will be prevented from participating on duty days until all documentation is received by the school.
- to read the **weekly email** and **messages on Lillio** to keep up with any important changes and information.
- to **drop-off and pick-up** my child/children on time *please see Hippo Nursery School's Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy*. Late fees will apply to children picked-up late.
- to read the **parent handbook** prior to my child/children's first day and respect all school policies.
- to respect the **health policy** of the school, keeping all family members out of school if they show any signs of a communicable disease or condition as per our health policy.
- to pay **fees on time** as per the financial agreement.

Failure to adhere to the above requirements may result in the discharge of your child from the program.

In addition to the above requirements, we encourage all families to participate in the following ways to ensure the smooth running of the school and gain the maximum benefits of being part of the school community.

- attend **both** the Fall and Spring Virtual General Meetings (one parent per family)**.**
- participate in at least one 2 hour shift for our annual Hippo Café **fundraiser.**
- take on one **parent job** per family **(approximately 48 hours per year).**
- attend 2 out of 4 scheduled **work days (6 hours total),** or equivalent time per school year.
- participate fully on **duty day** every other week, or arrange with the educators to make-up the day or pay the missed duty day fee.
- attend the duty day staff training and policy review sessions – this is a requirement for all volunteers doing duty days.

Key Things to Know Before Starting at Hippo School

Separation Anxiety - First Days at Nursery School

Nursery school is a new and challenging experience for your child. Your child will learn to be part of a group, how to get along without you, and how to gain and enjoy many new skills in crafts, dramatic play, music, motor activities, etc. Adult patience during the adjustment period is rewarded by the confidence of children who begin to participate on their own accord.

Here are some useful tips (taken from *Your Baby & Child from Birth to Age Five* by Penelope Leach):

- Be honest with the child about your movements, don't "slip out" when s/he's not looking.
- When you and the teacher finally decide that s/he is ready to stay without you, tell the child.
- Remind your child, by name, of all the people s/he knows and the things that will be enjoyable to do.
- Keep it short. Once you've said goodbye, leave with confidence. Don't linger as it can be counterproductive. You can rest assured we will take care of your child.

Your child might also find comfort in having a small album of photographs of your family to carry with them as a reminder of home.

Once your child has settled, don't take their parting tears too much to heart. Many children who are genuinely enjoying and benefiting from group life find the parting moments hard. Sometimes even after adjusting, your child may be quite "clingy" on your duty day. Acknowledge their feelings about wanting you with them exclusively. Encourage them to participate in an activity and remind them that you will be staying until your duty day is over.

Absences

Parents must notify the school if their child will be absent from school. Please send a Lillio message, email or call the school with your child's name, date(s) of absence and reason (e.g. vacation, illness, 'day off,' tired, etc).

If your child is absent due to illness, please include the symptoms of the illness. We are required to track illnesses by Toronto Public Health and the Ministry of Labour. Our health policy states that children must remain at home if they are feeling unwell and unable to participate in the program. If your child or your duty day staff has a fever, vomiting or diarrhea they cannot return to school for at least 24 hours after the fever has subsided (without medicine), or 48 hours since the last incident of vomiting/diarrhea has occurred.

If a child is at school and is not able to participate in the program and develops symptoms of an illness (vomiting, fever etc.) or seems unusually lethargic or 'out-of-sorts' the child will be isolated and the family called to collect them.

Clothing at Hippo Nursery School

Children: Your child will enjoy nursery school if they come appropriately dressed to play and get messy. It is important for them to have a spare set or two of clothes in case they have an accident or get wet from water play.

Please provide **shoes that fit and are appropriate for outside play** (not crocs, flip flops or open toed sandals, or heels) are crucial for children, in order for them to get the most out of all the gross motor activities.

If wet weather is in the forecast, please send your child with rain gear, as we love to go out, jump in the puddles, and catch raindrops on our tongues.

In the winter, please have your child bring their mitts, hat and scarf even if they do not want to wear them. When they see their friends getting all the gear on they might be more inclined to follow suit.

Sunhats in the warmer weather is important too. We do have lots of shade in the playground but sometimes we go on outings and the children need protection from the sun.

We encourage independence in dressing, so anything you can do to work towards this goal at home is greatly appreciated.

PLEASE LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHING. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!!

Communication

We make every effort to return phone calls and emails as promptly as possible. Please understand that there is not always somebody in the office as the Supervisor and the Admin. Assistant may be assisting in the program.

The Hippo News Weekly Email

One of the primary ways we communicate to families is through the Lillio app and via email. Every Thursday, we send out a weekly email with a calendar of events, news, reminders & monthly program notes about what the children have been doing from the teachers.

Allergies and Special Food Requirements

We are an Allergy Aware Environment which means:

1. Do not bring tree nuts or peanuts, or any food containing them or potentially in contact with them, in the school.
2. Before coming into the school, make sure your and your child's hands and face are clean of traces of food.
3. Make sure that no food or candy arrive at school in your child's pocket.
4. Please note any allergies or sensitivities in your child's registration package. You must notify the school in writing if any new ones develop or if your child grows out of their allergy.

Epi-Pens for each child with severe allergies are carried by the teachers when the children are in attendance. Epi-pens are also kept on the back of the office door, each clearly labeled.

Anaphylaxis/Epi-pen Training

Please see our Anaphylactic Policy under the Policy section of this handbook.

School Facilities

Allergy aware environment

Hippo Nursery School is an **ALLERGY AWARE ENVIROMENT.**
Absolutely no nut products are allowed in the school at any time.

No Smoking

Please note that there is no smoking anywhere on school premises.

Fragrances & Scents

Please be aware that there are sensitivities to scents amongst staff and families so please try to minimize your use of scented products on your duty day.

Entranceway

Please keep all outside and inside doors closed and latched/locked. All parents (even those not on duty days) must watch for children around the door. Never let a child out of school or playground without an adult.

IMPORTANT: All children, including siblings, are not to open any door latches or use any of the security coded pads. Please reinforce this rule with all of your children.

Each family is assigned a **mailbox** labeled with your child's first name. Please check it every day for art work, permission forms for school trips, special events etc.
If you wish to post your own notices on the bulletin board, e.g. items for sale, babysitting, community events, interesting information, etc., please check with the office first.
You will also find **monthly schedules** posted for your convenience.

Cloak Room

Each child is assigned their own coat hook and cubby.
Please provide your child with a bag, labeled with her/his name, containing a complete change of labeled clothes and hang this on their hook or place in their cubby. If necessary, please also provide a supply of diapers. These are kept in a labeled bag under the changing station in the back room.

A closet for duty day staff coats is located on the west wall. Duty day staff may put their purses and backpacks in the space provided in the snack room.

There is a space just inside the entrance to the coat room where sign-up sheets are posted for various meetings, workshops and work days etc.

The Lost and Found is located on the window sill; please check it periodically. The school is not responsible for lost articles.

Washroom/Diaper Area

Children need to be supervised in the washroom. Children must always wash their hands after using the washroom and before eating. Our washroom is for children only. Please follow posted sanitary practices i.e. hand washing, sanitizing after diapering.

Staff Room

Our staff room is a lunch and meeting room for staff.

Kitchen

The kitchen door stays closed. Children are not allowed in the kitchen. Adults wash hands before handling food. Please remember that absolutely **no children** are allowed in the kitchen.

Playground

Our playground is inspected daily, monthly, seasonally and annually according to our licensing requirements.

We have a climbing structure with three slides and activity panels. We also have a sandbox with cover and wind protection along the north end fence, and a bike path the length of the playground.

Careful supervision of the playground by all adults will provide a safe and enjoyable environment for our children to play. Your teacher will assign you an area when you are supervising the playground on your duty day.

A gym mat must be wrapped around the tree, beside the climber, at all times when the children are in the playground.

Door to Church Hallway

No child is allowed in church hallway without an adult. Please keep the staff room and kitchen doors closed. To maintain good relations with the church, please keep noise in the hallways to a minimum.

Parking

Please do not park your car in the church parking lot!

The parking space beside the school is reserved for staff.

If you are driving to the school on your duty day, we suggest that you park on Benson Avenue (1 block south of St. Clair Avenue West) where you can park for 3 hours. Parking is limited to 1 hour on Rushton Road and the parking officers do check regularly.

Do not drive up onto the sidewalk to temporarily park your car for drop-off or pick-up.