



PROGRAM STATEMENT

To ensure quality programming, Kinder Grove follows “The Ministry’s Policy Statement on Programming, pedagogy and curriculum. The documents in which our program is based on are “How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)” and the ELECT, Early Learning for Every Child Today: A framework for Ontario early childhood settings.

How Does Learning Happen? promotes a shared understanding of children as competent, capable and rich in potential. It sets out broad goals for children and expectations for programs organized around the four foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression. *How Does Learning Happen?* also describes pedagogical approaches to guide educators and administrators in considering how best to support children’s learning and development.

ELECT: Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings describes how young children learn and develop, and provides a guide for curriculum in Ontario’s early childhood settings. It is based on six principles: setting the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour, health and well-being. Partnerships with families, Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion, A planned program supports early learning, the value of play and knowledgeable and responsive early childhood educators.

The program at Kinder Grove is designed to support and encourage children to grow to their highest individual potential in all areas of development. Each child will have the opportunity to: explore old and new ideas, enjoy experiences at their own pace, and integrate and gain an understanding of their environment. This is accomplished by ensuring that each child has numerous opportunities for social interaction emotional outlets, experiencing familiar and challenging tasks as well as physical activities. In doing, so, we can help each child learn how to cope with his or her environment in a positive manner, leading to high self-esteem and a high level of independence.

It is our intent to promote acceptance and inclusion of all families in our centre.

We believe it is important to have open communication between parents, families, caregivers and staff. Parents are welcome at the centre at any time during the day to visit with their child.

Combining *How Does Learning Happen?* Kinder Grove strives to provide high-quality experiences that promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children.

Working as a team, we will plan for and create positive early learning environments that:

1) Promote the health, safety and well-being of young children, families and educators.

At Kinder Grove our approach is:

- Bulletin Boards with the names and photographs of all the staff.
- Healthy menus for the week that follow Canada's Food Guide (Real Food for Real Kids). Daily options of vegan and vegetarian meals are available at parents request.
- Breakfast snacks available to the children who arrive early.
- Water available at all times during the day.
- Staff sitting with the children during meal times and engaging the children in conversation.
- Children being encouraged to serve themselves at snack and meal times and being encouraged to try new foods.
- Dietician reviewing the menu on a yearly basis.
- Staff entering the centre and the classrooms with keys. Parents entering the centre using the "punch key code" and knocking on the class door to be let in.
- Visitors signing in the "Visitor's Book" and being taken on a pre-arranged tour.
- A process to sign your child in and out of the program to ensure that supervision happens at all times.
- WEB Cam continually on enabling parents to see what their child is doing at any specific time.

- Staff washing their hands often during the day and instructing the children in proper hand washing technique.
- Opportunities for children to be physically active and to explore with their body, mind and senses.
- Classrooms with abundant materials at the child's reach promoting child independence.
- Inclement weather rearranging the opportunity for outdoor play to the daycare hall space or to the Kent School gymnasium .
- Daily, monthly, seasonal and annual playground inspections.
- No smoking signs.
- Positive and responsive interactions with, and among the children, parents, child care staff by modeling appropriate interactions and reactions and encouraging on-going communication.
- Teachers cleaning the room during the day and the TDSB cleaners tending the rooms on a nightly basis and during the day when needed.
- Toronto Public Health Guidelines and the Ministry of Education health & safety guidelines being followed.
- Currently there are no children with noted allergies. When a child with allergies is enrolled, an allergy list will be posted in each room, in the child's binder and posted in the kitchen. Prescribed inhalator or epi-pens will be kept in the child's classroom on a designated shelf area when the child is in the room and will be carried by the teacher in a labeled bag when the child leaves the room ensuring that the child has needed medication nearby at all times.

2) Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;

Kinder Grove arranges parent tours at pre-arranged parent convenient times. The Director or Centre Supervisor shows all prospective parents the bulletin boards with the staffing information, licensing documentation and menu plans. To ensure cleanliness in the infant room disposable slippers are provided for touring the room. All teachers are introduced, children's lockers are pointed out and the daily program and schedule is reviewed.

Once the child is enrolled, daily conversations happen between the teachers and the parents.

Our centre supports positive and responsive interactions with, and among the children, parents, and teachers by modeling appropriate interactions and reactions and encouraging on-going communication.

The infants' communication book is filled out on a daily basis by the parents and the teachers. Emails are responded to within a 24-hour time limit. Electronic newsletters, updates and the monthly menu plan are sent out on a regular basis.

We believe it is important to have open communication between parents, families, caregivers and staff. Parents are always welcome at the centre at any time during the day to visit their child. Families are also welcome to participate in the program. We "listen" to our families' views and opinions, as they are the experts of their children.

We provide opportunities in which the children can interact and communicate in positive ways and we model appropriate interactions with children, families and staff. The children are presented with positive options and solutions and are given the personal space needed to reflect in order to build their ability to self-regulate.

Kinder Grove teachers are continually monitoring their interactions with the children to provide them with positive learning opportunities. On a daily basis verbal reflection time happens between the supervisor and/or director with the teachers reviewing how specific interactions were handled. Possible scenarios are: "Did the teacher engage the child in stimulating activities", "Was positive calm redirection given", "Did the teacher follow the child's lead", "Was the child given time to play and reflect on their play?"

At Kinder Grove each staff member is aware of the centre's Behaviour Management Policy and the Serious Occurrence Policy. Our teachers have a background in child development. This knowledge translates into age and stage appropriate activities. Providing stimulating activities and exposing the children to a variety of situations, will encourage the children's development, keep them engaged and stimulated. By providing a variety of social interactions

individual playtime, gross motor activity, adequate rest and wholesome nutrition, many behavioural problems will be eliminated.

3) Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;

Our Approach is

- Many different ways for children to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through;
- A rich variety of art materials and sensory materials available for the children and presented to the children.
- Interactive activities including story telling, singing, dancing, talking to teachers, talking to other children, games, dough
- Construction materials such as Duplo, blocks
- Woodworking (age-appropriate)
- Science experiments and problem solving.
- A safe environment that provides the children with interesting and challenging opportunities.
- Planned excursions outside of the centre to experience new learning opportunities and learn different skills.

4) Foster children's exploration play and inquiry:

Learning through Play

For many of our children our daily play activities are first time experiences. These play experiences are being provided, supported and encouraged by teachers aware of these teachable moments. Our children are encouraged to observe, discover the world around them, be challenged, and learn new ways to achieve an end result and to question "why?"

Our Approach is

- Our teachers together with the supervisor and director engage in a daily collaborative approach that incorporates discussion about how to support deeper exploration.
- Preparing the environment to foster learning and development and building on the children's ideas, questions and theories as observed in play.

- Teachers using all opportunities (verbal and through documentation and the use of the daily log book and individual binders) to communicate with the parents and families regarding the children's interests and experiences to expand their learning.

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

Both child-initiated and adult-supported experiences are visible for indoors and outdoors. These experiences foster the children's expression exploration, inquiry and where each child's learning and development will be supported.

Our approach is to:

- Post daily schedules for each group that reflects the flow of the day with minimal transitions.
- Provide a variety of quality play materials, craft supplies and equipment.
- Provide a sufficient number, variety, appropriate for different developmental levels, of play materials and that are available throughout the day.
- Arrange uninterrupted time for the children to play, explore and inquire both indoors and outdoors.
- Have small groups in different areas of the centre to enhance quality time.
- Transition time being used as "Learning Opportunities" and kept fluid by small group movement.
- Arrange space for the children to play, explore and inquire both indoors and outdoors.
- Schedule time each week for the staff to observe, document and plan, if necessary.
- Provide materials that the staff will need to observe, document and plan.
- Schedule time for staff to meet share, collaborate and reflect with each other.
- Support on-going training for staff.

6) **Provide opportunities for a range of experiences that support each child's learning and development.**

Our approach is

- Small groups (whenever possible) of children actively engaged in activities
- Educators observing the children and documenting when possible
- Educators discussing previous experiences that have been documented through photos and actual items (constructions that are still on display/as they were when built.)
- A focus on learning through play with educators encouraging and supporting questions, answers and problem solving on the part of the children.

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

We strive to provide a stimulating, aesthetically and pleasing environment where children can act on their curiosity, become engaged with their peers and surroundings and have a sense of belonging.

Our approach is:

- Environments that are child orientated.
- Arranging areas that promote relationships, develop gross/fine motor skills, cognitive, emotional, communication, language and literacy.
- Arranging the environment to ensure that educators can see all the children while interacting with them.
- Keeping the environment clean, tidy and free from clutter, including storage shelves, cupboards and containers for recyclables.
- Creating environments that acknowledge values and diversity through pictures, books, celebrations etc.
- Arranging the children's art work and documentation throughout the room and at the children's level to ensure they can be enjoyed by the children, parents and educators.

- Allowing time for the educators to reflect, document and collaborate on the different environments to ensure they are working.

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

Our approach is:

Educators that share their perspectives with parents and colleagues as a way of building meaningful relationships and as a means of supporting children's learning, development, health and well-being including the ability to self-regulate.

Encouraging all educators to communicate (verbally and through documentation) with parents regarding the children's interests and experiences to expand learning.

Educators using documentation not only to record play, but also to record learning through play. This will help the teachers to learn along with children as to what their interests are, how they think and how they learn which will enabling the teachers to extend learning and plan more meaningful experiences. Documentation provides the opportunity to make learning visible to other educators, to the children and to the parents. It provides opportunities to share what we see with parents and to include them in contributing to their child's learning.

Our approach is:

- Providing Webcam information for parents. This information is outlined on our website, handbook and postcards.
- Providing a Photography Facebook information sheet for the parents. This information sheet acknowledges that photos of their child are taken and that they can be used for the Kinder Grove Facebook page. An additional email is sent to the parents confirming that a photo can be used for the Facebook page.
- Having our documentations tools nearby to ensure all learning opportunities are captured.
- Post documentation of art, creations and stories of all participating children throughout the classrooms.

- Document how we see the children learning and developing and then using that information to share with the parents and colleagues.
- Reflect on our documentation to plan purposeful and meaningful activities.
- Encourage parents to read the weekly program plans. By doing this parents are able to see what the children interests were and how the teachers provided activities to meet these learning objectives.
- Reflect on what we have documented using that information to extend learning or make adjustments to our environments etc.
- Put documentation into individual binders for the parents to view, review and question. Once the parents have signed the Nipissing chart, it will be filed in the office in a secure cabinet.

9) Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and staff:

This will be seen by:

- Parents being welcomed at all time.
- Welcoming community partners as a resource and support to families, children and staff.

Parents as Partners:

Parents and families know their children the best and are able to help us in many ways to care for their children. They can offer us valuable information about their children, their cultures truly making our centre diverse. Making families feel that they belong will help the children to feel that they also belong.

- Providing families with a Parent Handbook annually to ensure they are familiar with our policies, our services including hours of operation, holidays etc.
- Providing the parent's opportunities to tell us about their children, during the first tour and in the application form.
- Educators will be approachable, eager for parents to share their knowledge of their children – strengths and preferences and day-to-day experiences.

- Making the families feel welcome – smiling face, greeting all parents, asking for their perspectives.
- Providing a Facebook page.
- Providing an information website.
- Providing news updates.
- Encouraging families to speak or email us regarding any comments, suggestions etc.
- Welcome parents to volunteer in class or on trips.
- Welcome parents to attend our Annual Picnic.

Community as Partners:

- Kinder Grove understands the importance that a community can play in the lives of the children and the families that we care for. Being active in the community can promote inclusion, a sense of belonging within the community and a chance for the children to see and explore the natural environment around them.
- Planned field trips with parents within walking distance of Kinder Grove. Some of these trips include the local library and picnics in the park.

Community Partners as a resource:

- Being familiar and utilizing the special services that are available to support children and families. Working closely with those services to ensure that we can and will meet the needs of the children and families in our care. One such Community Resource we work with is Living Toronto-Early Childhood Services.

10) Support staff or others who interact with children in relation to continuous professional learning.

Our approach is

- Workshops and on-line learning
- All staff are encouraged to take the City of Toronto Food Handlers Course.
- Staff attending evening meetings outside of the daycare.
- Registered Early Childhood Educators are required by their membership in the College of Early Childhood Educators to commit to their own ongoing professional learning.
- New ideas and strategies to support children's development introduced throughout the program
- Materials and research shared with parents.
- Program base on How Does Learning Happen?
- Staff supported to continually self-reflect and have discussions to provide the best possible learning environment for the children.

11) Document and review the impact of strategies on children and their families.

Our approach is

- Providing an ongoing record of development
- Providing educators tools to enable them to reflect on the impact of their activities and strategies.
- Providing a visual and oral record that enables parents to review their child's experiences and development.
Documentation can be seen on the wall and in the binders.
- To provide parents with the opportunity to daily view their child on the webcam.

Before working or volunteering at Kinder Grove all new staff, students and volunteers are required to review the program plan statement. Any time the program statement is updated both staff and volunteers are required to read the revised statement. A yearly review and signing of this statement is also required each January. All revised plans will be posted on the Kinder Grove bulletin board and shared with the parents.